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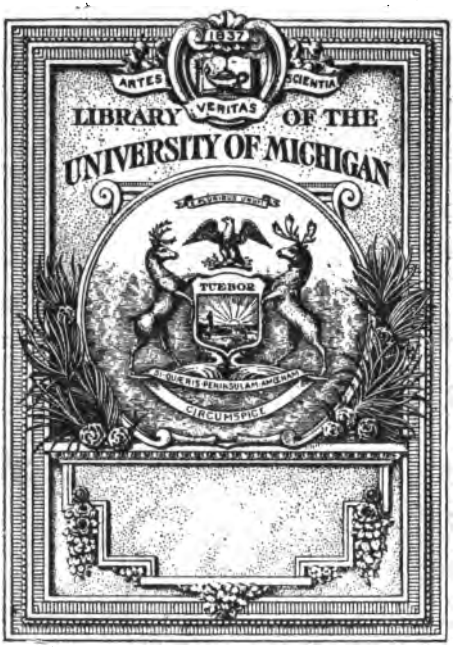
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THE SILVER AGE

The Author desires to thank the proprietors of *The Century, The Forum, The New York Tribune* and the *Boston Evening Transcript,* for permission to reprint here the stories which appeared in their periodicals.

THE SILVER AGE

AND OTHER DRAMATIC MEMORIES

BY

TEMPLE SCOTT

Author of "The Pleasure of Reading," "The Use of Leisure," etc., etc.

NEW YORK

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1919

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To

D. GEORGE DERY, Esq.

Accomplished Gentleman and Wise Friend

I Dedicate This Book

In Acknowledgment of the High Pleasure

I Have Enjoyed in His Fraternal Companionship

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THE SILVER AGE

Where silver mists the hill-tops cloak,
Where scents the air the wood-fire's smoke,
Where green and white in sunlight's shine
The red-roofed house gleams o'er the chine,
There 'neath the soundless sky's blue dome,
There is rest—there is home.

Where hosts of pines 'gainst western sky
Uplift their serried spears on high,
And through their branches' fret of bars
Shine the kind eyes of evening stars,
Where glows the sunset's golden foam,
There is rest—there is home.

The year's brave story, blue and gold,
By sun and cloud and greenwood told,
Enchants my heart and lifts my mind
To dreams of hope that I may find,
When spent of strength I no more roam,
There my rest—there my home.

Companion dear on life's high road,
Who shared my pain and sorrow's load,
Unfettered from the world's demands,
Content we'll wait on love's commands,
Where silvered gleams the even's gloam,
Where is rest—where is home.

THE SILVER AGE

I RECALL a day many years ago—how many I dare not count—when the head master of the school appointed me a monitor, with the special duties of keeping an eye on the boys during recess and reassembling them later for their class studies. I remember that I was very proud of this accession to office, and that I listened gravely to the dominie's dignified words in which he emphasized the call I had received as a step on the road to self-reliance and manhood. I know I did not fully understand all he said to me, but I promised to acquit myself worthily.

The next morning, at the usual hour, I took my allotted stand on the topmost of the stone steps which led down to the playground, and watched my schoolmates at their games of marbles, leap-frog, peg-top and rounders; and as I watched them a wave of utter despondency surged over me, and my eyes filled with unbidden tears. I saw now, what I had not before conceived, that my new dignity had debarred me from my old splendid freedom, and that I might never again take a part in this enchanting play that was being enacted before my gaze. The sounds of laughter and free-lunged enjoyment struck in me such a pang of melancholy that for a time I felt convinced I would never again know what it was to be happy as I once was. A veritable hunger of desire seized me to run down

the steps and fling myself into the vortex of the merry life for which my whole soul went out in a longing inexpressible.

But I remembered the master's admonition and my promise, and I resolved not to give way. It would be derogatory to my position now to mingle with my inferiors; so I held back and tasted instead the bitter waters which those drink who live on high places while yet thirsting for the wine of the spirit of common fellowship with their kind. I had never before experienced such a feeling of utter loneliness, and, for the first time, I realized, even though my heart still clung to it, that my boyhood had gone from me, and that I should no more be careless and free.

The friends I had cherished, the companions who had climbed the orchard's walls with me in reckless daring, the lads who fought by my side against the rival school in many a snowball battle, these could now be but acquaintances, whom I might loftily and condescendingly accost, but with whom I must no longer walk arm in arm. The ecstatic hours I had spent with them over deeds of some belted knight or pirate of the Spanish Main, whose remarkable careers I had followed in the numbers of a penny weekly, these hours were to be but as the dreams of golden days forever vanished in the mists of time. I must now eat my lunch in solitary state, not daring to proffer a bite from my dried-meat sandwich for a mouthful of another's juicy apple. I must walk home alone, unaccompanied by an admiring one who would share my hopes and listen to my tales of prowess. The realization of

this sudden separation from my fellow beings came to me as a shock, and it was many days ere I accepted the fact as inevitable.

Often did I sneak down from my pedestal and surreptitiously steal a place in a game of marbles, and in pretence of seeing "fair play" demonstrate that my ancient skill was still with me. But the old intoxicating spirit of the victory won was gone. It had evaporated with the freedom that had been denied me. I saw also that the boys took my entrance into their sacred circles as an intrusion. They seemed to be not at all put out when I won, taking it as a matter of course, and when I once played for the usual stakes they paid up with unconcealed ill-grace and not at all in the proper spirit of the gambler who had lost a fair game fairly. I was made to feel that I had taken a mean advantage of them. But a few short days ago I was admired as a master, and now—well, now there was no special merit in a monitor winning. Indeed, I soon found there was grave danger in his losing. For when I met my match, as I did on one unhappy occasion, the tale of my defeat was twice told, and for days after I was met with grinning, triumphant faces. I had gained in rank, but I had lost my original greatness. *Sic transit gloria mundi.* From that time I kept my lonely seat high on the steps, and watched the boys at play with a broken heart.

I am thinking of those by-gone days now as I sit in my study with my open book lying unread on my knees, listening to the gay chatter of my children in the next room. I hear them discussing the new play they are going to see with the young men who are

to accompany them, and whose evidently welcomed raillery, which grates on my nerves, they are receiving with peals of laughter. My wife is sitting opposite me, knitting socks for soldiers, but she seems to be highly pleased with the silly chaffing, for she is smiling as though the stupid noise augured happy coming events. I become aware that my book is not at all interesting, and I have an overwhelming desire to rise from my seat and go into the next room to share in the fun and add to the laughter. I know no reason why I should be left out here in the cold. I am not the old supernumerary they must think I am. I'll just show them that I still know how to play and be freely happy even as the youngest and best of them. Then I glance at the lady opposite and see the graceful head with its new silvered beauty and, instinctively, I pass my hand over the broad bald space on mine, and I heave a sigh of melancholy resignation. Nay, remain where you are, I say to myself, the god of bounds is making his rounds your way, and has signalled to you to make ready to take in sail. Breathe silence, and let the dying rays of the sun of your day wash its dusk with silver. Your flame is but the spasmodic flickering of a spent candle.

And yet, 'tis but a few short years since these happy girls were my happy playmates in the flowery fields of pleasaunce, and my boon companions in ambrosial evenings, when we drank lustily of the juice of the ripe grapes we culled from the gardens of literature. Alas, alas, I have been promoted again, by the Master of all masters this time, and I must needs find consolation in the cold isolation of

a new dignity, that of the oracle who is consulted on rare occasions only, and for whom there is no place in the play of life. Thus it is that I am again very lonely.

But, by St. Athanasius, I do resent the intrusion of these young men whose silly sallies are applauded with such heartfelt laughter! My far profounder and far richer humor never met such hilarity of greeting, nor was it ever countered by such brilliancy of spontaneous persiflage. By what right do these mincing fellows hunt on my preserves? Who are they that they should presume to oust me from my place in the lives of my children? How dare they thus challenge my sovereignty and interfere in the exercise of my natural privilege?

Ah, back to your musty tome, old man, and don't be an ass! Let them alone to make their memories of happy days, even as you made yours in your time, and betake yourself to your own memories, for these are all that are left to you now—these and the silvered beauty of the dear lady opposite, who is still smiling at her fancies like the true philosopher she is. Take example by her, be content to bask in the sunlight of youth, and be thankful to the kind fates that it is shining for you.

I turn the leaves of my book idly for a few moments, but my thoughts give me no rest.

> I cannot but remember such things were,
> That were most precious to me.

The field of buttercups with its lush grass, green and tender and yielding to the body as I lie with face to the heaven's mystery of blue. A soft blowing air

from the south comes faintly scented with the brine of the sea. It was here that I first knew the sweet companionship of children just budding into an awareness of life. Here the little ones would gather the flowers and crown me with posies, or run riotously after butterflies, themselves like winged cherubs in their windblown skirts. Here they would lie down beside me, rest their hot heads on my breast and listen to the tales of Robinson Crusoe and Aladdin's wonderful lamp. Here they would roll me over and over down the brae to the hawthorn-blowing hedge, the while the summer breezes carried abroad the liquid notes of their gurgling delight. And when we were all very tired from the day's strenuous pleasures, the youngest would climb up and sit astride my neck, and lay its little black head on mine in sleep, while the others clung to my coat and held my fingers tightly clasped with their warm, moist hands, as we marched down the winding lane to the cottage by the stream where mother stood waiting with her heart in her eyes. I, too, have been in Arcadia.

With the turning of the leaves of my book I turn the seasons also, and I see a tiny, white-painted wooden house in a cleft of the hills topped with swaying black pines and redolent of the scent of balsam. The place where this cottage stands is seven days' voyage from the field of buttercups. Here, on summer mornings would stand before me a row of half-naked little brown elfins, while I held the hose and played over them the cold water from the upland well. How these leprechauns do dance in the spray and send forth shrieks of unrestrained

glee as I pipe and pipe and pipe! Here on cool autumnal evenings, when the lamps were lit and the wood fire crackled fraternally, these same elves of the hills, now clad in white nightgowns, would sit on low stools round the hearth, while I read aloud to their eager ears the pathetic tale of Little Dorrit's devotion, or unrolled the splendid tapestry of "The Cloister and the Hearth," or chanted the wonderful deeds of the Count of Monte Cristo and the entrancing career of the immortal D'Artagnan. What a breathless stillness held the room on these glowing nights! I see again the mystery of wonder and awe with which the big, brown eyes ranged around me are filled; the parted lips in faces transfigured in the light of the visions conjured up by their young imaginations; the nervous clasping and unclasping of little hands from sympathy with suffering and trials and victory borne with heroic dignity. And when the reading was over for the night, what sighs of relief from their overcharged bosoms!

It seems to me now, as the sounds of these sighs reverberate in my memory, that they were the beating of invisible wings of angelic thoughts sent flying from the impassioned minds of these little acolytes serving at the high altar of romance. How I wish now I had gathered them and stored them in my heart to give them visible shapes in the days to come when I could speak with them on a fairer level of understanding! But a wiser heart than mine caught them, and from its store of silken treasures she spun the threads that guided me later through the labyrinthine corridors of these children's souls. And I see her as she sat then, darning elfins'

stockings, and smiling in full appreciation at me, as with back and shoulders bent and clustered with drooping head, I mount the stairs to the uncompanioned way that leads all happy children to the star-spangled skies of the Land of Nod.

I am still turning the leaves of my book, and now there has come the realization of our dreams of a home of our own among those same pine-crested hills—dreams we had told each other in the sweet intimacies of family confidences. It is a red-roofed house, white and green in the clear sunlight, and within it a spacious living-room walled in yellow stained cedar and outlined with great brown beams of spruce and hemlock. At one end is the broad and deep red-bricked hearth with its chimney rising through a gallery to the roof. A fat, resinous log of native pine tongues its flaming and inviting fraternity. In wide cushioned armchairs and on a high-backed oaken settle, sit young women, graceful as fawns, self-assured in a tranquil dignity, yet still tender and responsive to the impress of loving hands or the call of parental appeal. The talk is no longer a monologue; father takes somewhat a back seat now, for these ladies have minds and speech of their own. They play with bubble fancies blown from pipes in which are flowing the living waters of their sparkling humor. Ah, dear me, what a company we were then of mutual entertainers, around the fireside or the dinner table! How we lifted our voices in song to the glory of brave hearts of oak and in praise of those good old times when Joan's ale was new, my boys, when Joan's ale was new! How we did strut our amateur mimic stage in

impromptu burlesques which revealed so shrewd an insight into human nature, yet took account of the sweetness of human hearts! How we would dance to the dronings of a decrepit gramophone which rasped out a music only bearable by light hearts and lighter feet! And I remember also steering carefully a somewhat portly lady with silvered hair through those mazes of "The Blue Danube" we had trodden years ago when time had been enamored of her sylph-like form. "The old music rings yet in my ancient ears."

Ah, that's the banging of the outer door! They have gone to their play, and I am left to my book and the gentle dame who sits opposite to me, knitting socks for soldiers. I become aware that I am fingering the leaves of the book and I look down, but I see only black lines across white paper. It is often thus now when, after I am released from my wooden desk of drudgery, I sit at home reading, that I suddenly see nothing but black lines upon white paper. It must be that my eyes are growing dim with age, or that my spectacles become moist from the vapor in the room. But the old places at table are vacant, the seats by the fireside are empty, and the air of the home a solemn stillness holds, save for the clicking of knitting needles or, occasionally, the distant ring of laughter from the youngest, who is entertaining and fascinating a guileless undergraduate. Ah, me, I feel I have been dispossessed of what was for me the riches of my life—the youth-preserving elixir which I nightly distilled from the adventurous hearts and joyous faces of my children, and which I drank for my earthly salva-

tion. I suppose I must grin and abide by it. Time is merciless, and may not be moved by regrets or the mere turning back of the hands on the face of the clock. Yet dare I nourish a hope? Dare I believe that in my grandchildren I shall, if time be kind, rejuvenate my life-clinging spirit? Surely, I may; for these little ones who come fresh from the heart of God have the true wisdom and the true love, and they will know me as one of their company, and welcome me as going to the place they have just left. "God's speech is on their stammering tongue, and His compassion in their smile."

Still, it is not easy for me to realize that I am no longer of an age interesting to youth; that I am *passé,* a back number; that however much the spirit in me is still willing, I have really lost the charm that once held. Or is it that I am grown to second childhood and evince its senile selfishness? Surely not yet, not yet! For despite the broad bald patch I still have hair enough on my head to make a decent show of being in the ranks with the rest and the best of them. And I do not ask for more than my fair share—even less would be welcome. I will give as much and more than I receive, if only they will give me the chance, if only they will ask of me. But of what avail is this camouflage of carefully brushed hair against the lynx eyes of the young! And how shall I arm myself against youth's magical instinct? I may fool my contemporaries, but I cannot deceive these divinely gifted beings who have the untainted scent of wild animals and their unerring insight. At best my gaiety is but the Indian summer of my life, and already the sap is ceasing to flow,

and the leaves are turning brown, ready for falling. They are right—my wisdom is but dullness, my gambols are but an old man's folly, my leadership but the natural circumspection of the creature whom circumstance has bereft of courage. And youth shall be neither dull nor prudent. Its supreme and splendid virtues are the wildness and freedom of its untarnished beauty, and the enthusiasm of its arrogant and daring heart.

I know I have, of late, shown disquieting symptoms. I have hesitated when entering with them on their adventures—the waters of the lake are cold, and the hills are steep, I must confess. I shiver on the brink and I pound somewhat heavily on the road with my stick. At such times I have caught their commiserating looks and have heard them whispering to each other that they must go it a little slowly with father; he gets tired soon. Bless their dear eyes, I was tired sooner than they saw. They do not come to me so often, as they were wont, for my advice, for they have learned that it does not chime in with their desires. I feel, also, that I am beginning to be not so quick-witted as I once was, and I lag behind them in the swift play of their repartee. Of course, I would have been *de trop* among the theatre-party to-night, a wet blanket, a *tertium quid,* a well-meaning, dear old man, but——. Ah, there's the rub! There's always that "but" when golden youth assays the silver age. Surely, it is more restful and proper that I comport myself with my peers!

"My dear," I say to the lady knitting socks for soldiers, "shall we go to the movies?"

"You silly boy!" the lady answers, "you are always going to the movies now. What did you do when there were no movies?"

"Ah, my dear, I had you then."

"And you have me now, have you not?"

"Not when you are knitting socks for soldiers."

The lady looks at me quizzingly for a moment, then she lays aside her knitting and comes to me with her golden smile. She puts her hands on my shoulders tenderly and murmurs:

"You'll never grow old."

AN ODD VOLUME

'AN ODD VOLUME

A GENERATION ago a visitor to any of the larger towns of England could always find recreation in the market-place on a Saturday evening, when the square, lit up by hanging kerosene lamps and flaring torches, would be filled with a good-natured crowd of working men and women, bustling and hustling to spend their week's wages on their household needs. The place then re-echoed with the leather-lunged appeals and raucous cries of the merchants, who were all clamoring simultaneously to attract attention and entice the visitor to a purchase. On stalls, carts, wheelbarrows and even the bare stones of the street, were displayed for sale every conceivable kind of commodity, from "pig's trotters" for the night's late supper, to a tarnished gilt volume for the parlor table. The stall-keepers button-holed the passer-by to advise him of the golden opportunity for a bargain; the barrow-man evinced a persistent sympathy in the stranger's welfare, from a like intent; and the crier in the street philanthropically offered his treasures for "a song." He who hesitated was lost; for to give ear to the persuasive pleas of these wizards in eloquence, was to become as clay in the hands of master-potters. The experience of the moulding process, however, was often worth the price of admission to this open-air theatre, where the Human Comedy was played

naturally with a far more revealing power than even the art of Balzac has delineated it.

I was a regular frequenter of these markets in my days of nonage, though my interest lay neither under the sheds nor on the barrows. I preferred to listen to the orators of the *pavé*, those wingless and leaden-footed messengers of light, who brought their merchandise in sacks on their backs, and who took their stations under the stars, ready to stake both fortune and life on their tongues' prowess. These, as a rule, were booksellers, poor derelicts of the fraternity who had been wrecked on the ocean of life, and who had been cast on the rocks with just enough means to pick up a meagre livelihood by peddling literature. I first made their acquaintance when the buying of a book was the only luxury my pocket-money permitted me to enjoy; and as I recall the many delightful hours I have spent, charmed by these wandering spirits from the Realm of Gold, I am once again a citizen of Arcadia, a child of romance and dreams.

Among the many booksellers I have known, one stands out in my memory as a genius in the business. He belonged to that lower order of the trade that sell books by the method known as "mock auction," the method of which Dickens's Dr. Marigold was so masterly an exponent. It was on a memorable evening in the late autumn that I first caught sight of a strangely clad figure come stumping into the square, his back bent almost double from the weight of a sack he was carrying, reminding me of the picture of Atlas in my school geography. He made a shuffling noise as he walked, and I noticed

then that he was club-footed. When he had found a suitable space, he deposited his load on the ground and looked about him with a smiling face as he polished his iron-rimmed spectacles with a soiled bandanna handkerchief. Immediately a crowd began to gather about him and I followed with the rest. After emptying the sack of its contents on the stones, he motioned to us to form a wider circle around him, remarking that he wished everyone of us to see the rich treasures he had brought for our mental delectation, our moral improvement, and our spiritual enlightenment. The broad, good-humored face looked at us benignly, its rubicund nose glowing like a red lamp from a distant train, through a mist of pale, sandy hair in which his massive head was widely framed. His clothes, stained, greasy and ill-fitting, seemed to be just hanging on his body —a nondescript figure of seeming power, yet pathetic in a tattered dignity. But I forgot all about his appearance when he held aloft one of the volumes, and began to speak in a rich, resonant voice which came from him like the note of an organ.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I am one of those unfortunate beings, happily not very common in this vale of tears, who are known as philosophers. Ah, I see you do not understand me. Well, my good friends and fellow sufferers, a philosopher is a man who was born under an unlucky star; a man doomed, therefore, to be disappointed; a man always hoping and never realizing his hopes. If you ask me why he should be so afflicted, I cannot answer. It may be it is because of his tender heart which his nature will not permit him to harden. That's the

cross he has to bear through life. Do you wonder that such a man is doomed to disappointment? What chance has any man with a kind heart in this world? Ah, my dear friends, it's a great mistake to try to do good to people. They will never believe you are sincere. Your most unselfish actions are certain to be misinterpreted, and the more you protest your honesty the more will you be suspected of a secret purpose to get the better of others. The philosopher, who is, of course, a simple-minded man, cannot understand this. He is so simple-hearted himself that he thinks everybody else is as honest as he is, so that he is almost broken-hearted at the cruel mockeries which greet him on every side. That's the tragedy of every good man's life. You and I know that only too well; and yet we cannot help being what we are, can we? But it would not be half so bad if we could find someone, if only once in a great while, who really believed in us. It is in the hope of finding that one man that the philosopher goes about the world, with a lantern in his hand, so to speak, seeking to satisfy the demands of his nature, to be a friend and a benefactor. For twenty-five years now I have been wandering in search of someone to whom I could do good, and I am still looking for him. That's what brings me here today. And as I look around me and see your intelligent faces with the light of friendship shining from your eyes, I am beginning to feel that my hope will be realized at last, and that I shall have the happiness of knowing that I have not lived in vain.

"My friends, I am here to do you the best service

any man can do to another. You may not think so, but it's the most solemn truth I ever uttered in my life. You shake your heads and smile? Well, I don't blame you. I've heard others talk as I am talking, and I know how little it amounts to. I have drunk the bitter waters of patronage, and tasted the ashes in the Dead Sea fruit of philanthropy. But my way of doing good is not the parson's way, nor the charity society's way, nor the missionary's way. These people when they do anything for you, make you feel small and mean, as though you were of no account, as if *they* were everything and *you* nothing but objects for pity. That's not doing good; that's doing worse than bad. My way is just the opposite to their way. When I do you good, I make you feel big, and as deserving as I am myself." Here he smiled archly at us with a humorous twinkle glinting through his spectacles.

"Does it do you any good to go to church? No! Why? Because it's no use going to church with an empty mind. Does it do you any good to receive charity? No! Why? Because it makes you feel cheap and weakens your power for work. Does it do you any good to give your pennies to save niggers' souls? No! Why? Because you've got souls of your own to save first. Now I do you good by selling you books. You look surprised. You don't see what good there can be in buying a book? Well, if you'll kindly give me your attention, I'll explain. A good book will fill your minds with high thoughts, so that you can go to church and meet your God with understanding; a good book

will inspire you with courage, so that you may have the heart to be as God intended you to be—brave, and free, and equal with the best; a good book will put a spirit of hope into your breasts, so that you will believe in the dignity of your manhood, and live up to it. That's what books will do for you, and that's the kind of good I do by selling them to you. Do you look for a friend? Can you find a kinder, a wiser or a truer friend than a good book? Are you lonely and long for some one to talk to? Can you have a more sincere or a more elevating conversation than with a good book? Books never get tired of you, and if you get tired of them, you can put them aside without hurting their feelings. They are always calm and in good temper and ready to serve you. They don't scold or find fault with you or make you angry or make you feel ashamed of your ignorance. They will laugh with you and cry with you. They bring the smiles of innocence and the sighs of hope and the tears of sympathy. They make you forget your troubles and lift you on the wings of delight. In sorrow they are a comfort, and in joy a companion. And, what is perhaps more satisfying than anything else, they treat you like a gentleman. With a good book by the fireside, you are in the best society, as good, aye, and better, as the noblest and richest in the land. And all this kindness, ladies and gentlemen, all this enjoyment and instruction, costs you what? Only a few pence. Why, you'd give your heads to have the King of England talk to you for five minutes in a friendly chat, and yet here, for a shilling, you can have the Kings of Thought—Shakespeare and

Milton, Cervantes and Johnson—talk to you by the hour, or for as long as you like, at your own convenience and pleasure. Did I say a shilling? Why what have we here?" With a fine gesture he opened the book he held in his hand. "A-ah! Now this is something worth while! Here is an old and tried and trusty friend." He patted the worn calf-binding with affectionate strokes, as he turned to us a countenance beaming with anticipatory delight. "Listen to this: 'If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone. A man, sir, should keep his friendship in constant repair.' There's wisdom for you! Keep your friendship in constant repair and you'll find a hand stretched out to help you, a smile ready to greet you, a heart eager to comfort you. The man who wrote those words was one of the wisest Englishmen who ever lived. He knew what life meant, for he had suffered and had often known what it was to go hungry, as you and I have known. But he never lost heart. Through all his trials and troubles he lived, as all true-born Englishmen should live, with courage and a noble determination to be true to the best he knew. And the time came when he was recognized as a great man, when even the King of England was glad to receive and shake the hand of the man who had compiled the first great dictionary of the English language. That man, ladies and gentlemen, was Dr. Samuel Johnson, and this book is the story of his life, written by James Boswell, a gentleman of Scotland, who worshipped the very ground Johnson walked on. Did I say a shilling? I did; but I see from your

pleading faces, my good friends, that you want this book, and as I haven't the heart to ask you more than you can afford to pay, I'll make it ninepence. Ninepence, ladies and gentlemen, for the life of a great Englishman! Ah, I see you know my tender nature. Well, my dear fellow-sufferers in this bleak Aceldama of sorrow, you have touched my sympathies. I know what it is to want a good thing and not have the price, so I'll put it at sixpence, though I am making you a present of the book at that figure. Sixpence for a book of the wisest advice ever written for human beings! Why, the binding alone cost ten times the money! Don't let me go away disappointed! Surely, there's one man in this assembly worthy the name. Ah, my little man, thank you, I congratulate you on your purchase. You'll never regret spending this sixpence; and you'll live to thank me for introducing you to this masterpiece of literature."

I passed him my sixpence with a trembling hand and eagerly seized the precious tome. I had been so wrought up by the bookseller's moving address that I could not refrain from opening the book, then and there, to taste and see for myself the splendid feast he had conjured up in my mind. My first glance fell on the title-page, and there to my puzzled astonishment, I read the words, "Volume the Second." For a moment I was in doubt, but the last page confirmed my incipient fear, for I saw there printed in large letters, "End of Volume Two."

"Here," I cried excitedly to the bookseller, who was already launched in the exordium of a second

oration, "this is only the second volume; where's the rest?"

The red-nosed Diogenes stopped in his discourse and looked at me for a moment in speechless surprise. Such an interruption was evidently quite unexpected, coming as it did from a mere boy. But he recovered himself easily, however, and smiling amiably, he said in a voice charged with tender admiration, "You're an unusually bright lad and I'm glad to know you." He came a step forward to me and said in a gentle voice, "The second volume, my boy, though you may not know it, is the best of the set. The other volumes are not a patch on that one. A complete set would cost you ten shillings, at least, in that edition; but here, for sixpence, you've got the cream of the work. Still, I don't want you to go away thinking I've imposed on you, and as you are a deserving lad, as well as an intelligent one, I'll make you a present of another book to make up for it. Here's the first volume of 'The Vicar of Wakefield,' with beautiful steel engravings. It's the best volume of the best story ever written in any language. If you don't like it after you've read it, come back here next Saturday and I'll exchange it for something else. There, gentlemen," he said, turning to his audience with a finely impressive air, "there's a boy after my own heart. I'd be proud to be the father of such a son. He'll grow up to be a great man, mark my words. I daresay he'll write a book himself, some day." And the gracious enchanter patted my shoulder and resumed his second address, as if nothing unusual had occurred.

I did not quite see that I was any the better advantaged by being given an odd volume of another work to match the odd volume I had bought, but a natural shyness prevented me from arguing the point in public, especially with so erudite and accomplished a master, and I was also greatly ill at ease at being made the object of so much attention; besides, he was already deep in an exposition of the beauties of Fielding's "Tom Jones." So I said no more, but, waiting to be unobserved, I edged out of the crowd quietly and ran off home with my two books, which I kept for many years as souvenirs of my early adventures in book-collecting.

This was not my only meeting with the gay deceiver, though I was ever afterwards very careful not to spend any more of my meagre allowance on his wares. I found out, later, that his sacks of books contained nothing but odd volumes. Only once did I see him sell a complete work, and that was a soiled copy of a "Keepsake" from which the plates were missing. Still, the man had cast the spell of his charm over me, and his voice was music in my ears. I do not know what it is that draws one to a dealer in old books, but it is a curious fact that he has a power of attraction that no other man of business holds. It may be that this power is born of our own interest in him. Our innocent feelings and desires which are nursed by association with books we, perhaps, unconsciously credit the bookseller as also possessing, and so we come to look upon him, not as a cold man of business, but as a kindred and sympathetic spirit. Be this as it may, the man belongs to a class of his own. He is

dyed with a sweet melancholy, as if the spirits of the disappointed and forgotten authors whose unsold books fill the shelves of his shop, had gradually passed into him and saturated his nature. He looks out on the world as if it were a passing show, for which he has, at best, but a kindly tolerance or a gracious condescension. He gives the impression that he lives in a far more interesting and desirable world. He is not discontented, rarely disturbed, and seemingly utterly indifferent as to whether or not he sells some of his books for which, indeed, he has conceived an affection as passionate as that of the bibliophile's. The Kingdom of the Mind must, surely, be a beautiful place in which to live, even if the checks we draw on the banks there are not accepted by our landlords here.

I am thinking of the booksellers of a generation ago. Those of the present day are of a different genus, and I can weave no romances nor indulge in fancies about them, for I confess, they are beyond my ken. Time was when I thought they also were as innocent as doves, but I have since found them to be wiser than serpents. No, it is to the booksellers of my youthful days that my heart goes out in an affection deep as it is exalting. It may be that my loyalty to my old loves is born of the bargains I once fished out of their boxes and stalls, bargains rarely found now; but I am sure this is not the true reason for my self-imposed exile from the land of books. I would still be willing to walk many miles to meet another such Diogenes as my old acquaintance of the odd

volumes, or my friend of sacred memory, Eli Sholes, that rare mind and chastened spirit who initiated me into the mysteries of the higher degrees of the Masonry of literature. Gladly would I present to the New York Public Library, that rare "Olor Iscanus," I bought for sixpence; or that Walton's "Lives" with old Izaak's autograph on the title-page, I bought for threepence; or that Suckling's "Fragmenta Aurea" of 1646, I picked up for a shilling; or that original quarto of Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," with the leaf of "Errata," I acquired for a crown, if I could live again those recreating hours of pure aspirations I experienced in listening to that orator of the market-place, or that wise expositor of Shakespeare and Swift, the dealer in rare books. But, alas, those flowers of our human kind are passed away with the snows of yesteryear!

As I have stated, Diogenes drew me to him, and as regularly as Saturday came round I would be in the square waiting for him. Sometimes he failed to turn up, and then I was very disappointed. He explained such absences on his return, by smilingly informing us that he had other parishes to minister to, which would starve without the intellectual food he brought them. On one occasion he told us that he had been in retreat purifying his soul; and the pathetic smile which accompanied his words still lingers in my memory. His talk, as I recall it now, was the most delightful of conversations, enlivened by many a merry tale of broad humor which always appealed strongly to his audiences. He knew, or at least

it appeared so to me, the lives of all the great men who had written books or played important parts in the world's history: and his disquisitions on their merits were embroidered with the gold thread of a shrewd judgment. He described situations with so fine a skill that I would marvel at the scenes he conjured up in my imagination. It was always with something of a shock that I heard him call out the price of a book and ask for a buyer, so completely had he enthralled me. Over Shakespeare and Milton he would wax eloquent indeed. He recited from "Paradise Lost" in a voice resonant with the rhythmic music of the splendid processional of the lines. It was from him that I first heard Hamlet's soliloquy, and he rendered it with dramatic gestures in a musing intonation of voice that were fulfilled of reflective thought. Neither Henry Irving nor Forbes-Robertson, with all the accompaniments of their scenery and costume, affected me since, as did then this unkempt bookseller, declaiming in the foul-smelling air of that noisy, crowded thoroughfare.

In time, he and I came to know each other better. When he would catch sight of me in the front row of the circle of his listeners, he would smile kindly, and then bend his discourse to me, seeming to find inspiration in the rapt attention I gave him. Frequently, after he had succeeded in disposing of a book for the price he originally asked for it, he would come up and whisper to me to keep an eye on his stock while he retired for a few minutes. I noticed when he returned that his nose glowed a deeper red, and, occasionally, his

gait would be far from steady. But the interlude seemed to have fired his imagination to a higher pitch, for he would resume with a power of appeal that never failed to bring increased patronage, and, sometimes, left him, as he put it, "sold out." Then he would fold his sack, and with a parting sally and a promise to be back another day, he would stump off and disappear in the blackness of the night.

As I watched the bent figure shuffling away I could not help speculating as to where he went to rest. Was it to a home where children were waiting expectantly for their father? Did they look for his coming as I did, to be charmed and delighted by the magic of his speech and the music of his embracing voice? Several times I followed him out of boyish curiosity, but I always lost him in a dark court, where he vanished through the doorway of a saloon. Once, I waited for him to come out, but the sight that met my eyes in the gloom was so distressing that my courage failed me, and I ran pantingly home, haunted all the way by a face that still visits me in disturbing dreams. That was my last pilgrimage to the market-place.

Several years later, as I was sitting in the back of Sholes's shop, discussing with him George Meredith's "The Egoist," we heard a heavy stumping on the boarded floor, as of one walking with difficulty. I looked up, and to my amazement, saw the spectacled face of my old friend of the odd volumes. Sholes rose quickly and met him half way.

"Well, Ollie," I heard him inquire, "are you any better?"

"No, Mr. Sholes, I regret to say this rheumatism is killing me by inches. I rarely sleep at nights. I'm afraid there'll be nothing for it but the workhouse hospital. I called to know if you've anything for me to-day."

"There's a pile in that corner I've been keeping for you for weeks. Where have you been?"

"Oh, the usual place, in solitude where we are least alone."

"Ah!"

"I'm ashamed to confess it. But what else is there left for me?"

"I know how you feel, Ollie, but are you sure you couldn't make a final effort? I'll help you gladly to start a stall. That's better than the open air, with your rheumatism."

"Ah, Mr. Sholes, you're very kind as you always have been. But I know my own weakness. Unhappily I am one of those that must 'live in the wild anarchy of drink.' I couldn't be tied to a stall. I must go on at the old game until death comes with his friendly care."

"Yes, I suppose you know yourself best."

Sholes helped him to fill his sack, and I watched the figure stumping away, bent beneath the double weight of his books and afflictions.

"Who is that man?" I asked Sholes.

"Ah, that's a tragedy," he answered. "If you want to hear a genius go and listen to him. The booksellers of the town make him gifts of their

odd volumes and he makes his living by selling them in the public markets."

I then told of my own experience of the man which amused Sholes exceedingly.

"Well, Ollie was right; you never regretted your purchase. Now there's a man who sets me speculating on the mystery of the human soul. We call him Ollie, which is friendly for Oliver, for we all love the man despite his failing—his surname had better remain in oblivion. He has been everybody's friend and his own worst enemy. I knew him many years ago as the head master of one of the grammar schools founded by Edward VI, in a small provincial town. He was then highly esteemed throughout the country. A ripe scholar, both in the Classics and in English, he had also a power of conversation and a charm of address, which opened to him the doors of the best houses. As a teller of tales I have never heard his equal. He had a remarkable memory on which he drew for quotations and apt allusions, that served to add grace to the thoughts he framed in the choicest language, and spoke in a voice of most appealing quality. Did you hear him quote from Ben Jonson, Byron and Coleridge, in the few sentences he spoke to me just now? His range of reading must be immense. These gifts, were unhappily his undoing. He grew inordinately vain of his powers and the impression he made, and began to think himself everybody's superior. The good living in the homes of the wealthy, and the tastes he acquired there, sapped his moral fibre. Drink became a passion with

him, and in time he grew intolerable even to his most forbearing friends. Then the descent was only too easy. He lost the mastership of the school and ruined his home which had been the pride of a noble-hearted sister, who died of grief at his degradation. After that he became a frequenter of the bar-parlors of inns, where he continued to hold forth to farmers, commercial travellers and even common rustics. He charmed these as he had charmed the others, for a time, and they fed his vanity and his craving for drink. But at last even they grew tired of his drunken assertiveness, and he was left to wander from place to place, making a living by peddling books. I have often thought of Ollie and his shattered life. His kind of vanity is a terrible disease. I can understand a pride in one's mental powers. That keeps alive a man's faith in himself, and is often very necessary for him to achieve success. Socrates and Shakespeare must have been such egoists, Samuel Johnson was another, Victor Hugo another, But to be vain of those powers which demand the body as a medium, that must debase if carried to anything like an extreme. Ollie was an actor in everything he did. His fine voice, his mobile features, his humorous, expressive eyes, his impressive manner and noble speech, all these were cultivated and employed for the sake of the applause which fed his vanity, and the genius was lost in the mummer. Ollie then was doomed to futility, to be a mere entertainer at a feast. Even now, open-eyed and repentant as he is, if you were to give him a good dinner and a bottle of wine,

as, I regret to say, I have occasionally done for my own amusement, the fellow will strut an imaginary stage as though he were the whole play. It's a fatal gift, this of the body's attributes, when the mind does not control them. I remember a famous minister of religion highly endowed as a preacher, say, after he had deeply moved his congregation with one of his noble sermons: 'Did you see them cry and wipe their eyes? Oh, I can do with them what I like!' There spoke the vain actor, not the proud bearer of a spiritual message. Vanity may be a charming weakness in women, but in men it's a disease, a sort of moral elephantiasis, when the virtues run to seed and are permitted to grow to vices again. Few who venture on this sea of self-esteem ever reach a haven of salvation who do not steer their course by the pole-star of the guiding soul. Had Socrates been as handsome as Alcibiades I question if Plato would have written the Phaedo or the Apology. 'The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make instruments to plague us.' The fire we have caught from heaven to light our soul's way, more often burns up our hearts, or we use it to forge the chains which bind us to the rock of our baser passions."

A month later I had occasion to call on Sholes on a matter of business, and was surprised to find him wearing a high silk hat with a broad black band. "You are just in time," he said, "I am going to poor Ollie's funeral. He died the other day and the booksellers have asked me to say a few words at his grave. Will you come?"

I went willingly, and when we arrived at the cemetery we found about a dozen members of the local trade already waiting for us. After the clergyman had read the last sentences of the beautiful Church of England service for the dead, and the coffined body had been consigned to its final home, Sholes spoke:

"My friends," he said in his soft, mellow voice, "he whom we have just laid to rest was a rare man, though one of many failings. But his troubling heart will trouble him no more. We, who are here to do him this our last service of respect, may never forget the fine qualities of character which were his shining gifts and which he so bountifully poured out for our enjoyment. He was ever ready to do a kindness where reward was impossible, and always willing to give of the best he had to give. And his best was a rare thing. I knew our friend in those years when he was honored by his peers and welcomed by those in high places as an equal. Had you known him then you would understand my feelings now, as I stand here by his grave, and speed him to God who will forgive him all because He knows all. With his death falls from him all that was gross and impure, and there remain, living in our memories while life shall last, the brilliant scholar, the delightful companion, the charming gentleman, the large-hearted friend, whom we were proud to help in his need, and whose like we shall never meet again. In thinking of him thus we shall bear his spirit company along the uncompanioned

way he now treads, and speak for him before the Judgment Seat. This it is our privilege as well as our duty to do, and in doing it we shall strengthen and fortify ourselves with the best that was of our friend."

THE LADY AND THE SINGING-BIRD

THE LADY AND THE SINGING-BIRD

ELI SHOLES sat at the far end of his little book-shop, feet on fender before a blazing coal fire, reading the morning's newspaper. The day was dull and misty, of the kind that is so frequent in the late autumn on the west coast of England. Puffs of heavy white vapor, dimming the yellow gas jets, were being blown into the shop by a damp, salt breeze that chilled as it blew; but Sholes sat, cigar in mouth, puffing and reading contentedly, regardless of the weather and seemingly oblivious of either time or tide.

On such mornings, customers, as Sholes knew, were rare visitants to this shop in the narrow bye-street. There was nothing to do then but to await fortune's favors with a tranquil mind. A long, pale, bearded face with a stern, square forehead, and dark, searching eyes were the chief features about a head that was set firmly on a solid neck. The figure as it reclined in the wooden arm-chair, seemed sparse; the hands were white and of almost feminine mould. He might have been forty years old, though a number of gray streaks in the straight, thick hair of head and beard, would indicate a more advanced age. The mouth was firm but with a pleasant curve to the lips which were plainly visible in spite of the beard. A thoughtful, sad face, but with a spiritual sadness.

The sound of quick footsteps caused him to raise his head in its direction.

"Hello! Randall!" he cried, rising quickly, "I am glad to see you! How are you? You haven't been round for some days. What have you been doing?"

"Oh, the same old grind. We've had a lot of extra work lately; I'm sick of the damned office. I can't stand that old skinflint of a money-grubber I'm with much longer."

The speaker was a young man of a remarkably handsome face with curly, brown hair surrounding his head and spilling from under his hat. The features would have been faultless, but for a ridiculously small mouth like that of a pert and selfish girl. He stood gracefully, the youth of him seeming to radiate light through the fogged gloom of the shop.

"What's he been up to now?"

"Nothing special. It's just the nature of the beast that gets on my nerves. But let him go to the devil. I didn't come to talk about him. I came to talk about something else. Are you busy?"

"Busy, on a day like this! You ought to know the book-business better by this time than to ask that question. No, I'm not busy. Sit down and tell me what it is. Another book to sell? All right, let's look at it."

"No, Sholes, it's not money this time, though I could do with it. I may ask you to buy my Lamb manuscript; it's worth more than the ten quid I once offered it to you for. No—it's not money." Randall's blanched face expressed trouble in every feature.

"What is it, then?" Sholes's impassive face took on an almost inquisitive look.

"Well—I'm—rather in a fix, and I've come round to see if you can help me out of it."

"O-oh! What is it? Father found you kissing a servant girl?"

"You are always joking me about girls."

For a moment he forgot his anxiety, and the little mouth smiled its fullness of vanity with a self-satisfied curve of the lips; but the look in the hazel eyes was a troubled one.

"Well, if it's not money and it's not a girl, what is it?"

"It's a—a woman!" His lids shut down, and his long fingers fumbled about the rim of his hat. The muscles of his face were strained.

"A—ah!" The exclamation breathed itself out long-drawn and hard. "Sit down on this stool, and tell me all about it. Don't talk too loud—that imp of Satan, William, behind the counter, has a donkey's ears on his red head. Who is she?"

"No one you know."

"Married or unmarried?"

"Married."

"The devil!" Sholes leaned back scratching his bearded chin. "But I'm not surprised. You'd tempt St. Theresa herself, you young faun. What's she like? I mean, what does she look like?"

"She's very beautiful."

"Hm! I suppose she's your inspiration. I might have known there was something behind those last sonnets you brought me. How long have you known her?"

"I met her first about a year ago."

"A—ah!"

"We've been—very—intimate."

"O—oh!"

"And the husband suspects something. He's told her he doesn't want me to come to the house any more."

"I don't blame him. Why not take him at his word and keep away?"

"I can't—and she—won't let me."

"Whew! Then you are not anxious to keep it up?"

The young fellow hung his head as if in shame. He shifted his feet and fumbled with the pockets of his waistcoat. Then, looking up with a furtive, sly glance as of a child afraid of a scolding and yet anxious to know how severe it would be, he saw that Sholes's face had suddenly become hard and cold. Quickly, he changed his expression, and in a pleading voice, said:

"I'm in an awfully uncomfortable position, Sholes. I am, indeed. And I am very fond of her." Sholes turned his head away to hide the sneer he was unable to repress. "I am indeed," the young man reiterated. "I would do anything to make her happy. Only he's such a commonplace Philistine of a fellow that he doesn't understand. He might be very nasty."

"Hasn't he a right to be nasty? You seem to think that every woman you are 'really very fond of,' as you obligingly put it, ought to be highly complimented by your attentions; and that you are doing her husband a favor! Don't you realize

what you are doing? Don't you understand that you are transgressing the one sacred law of our social existence? You say, you'd do anything to make her happy. What right have you to say that?"

"By the right of love."

"Love! And you talked just now of being very *fond* of her! Damn it, man, you make me very impatient with you."

"You are not fair to me, Sholes. I'm prepared to stand by what I've done. I'm ready to marry her."

"Pshaw!"

"Now, don't be impatient; let me say what I want to say. I'm ready to do anything; but I don't know what to do for the best. I came for your advice. I thought you would, out of friendship, tell me the wisest course to take."

"My dear boy, it's impossible for an outsider like me to tell you what you ought to do. I don't know all the conditions, nor all the facts. I don't know him and I don't know her. You must find your own way out of this wretched imbroglio. The trouble is, that you yourself complicate the situation."

"I! How?"

"Yes, you, by your vanity."

Randall's face turned a vivid scarlet. He looked up indignant and confused. He was about to utter a remonstrance, when Sholes put up his hand.

"I know what you are going to say, but I'm right just the same. This is your first experience of a serious nature, if I'm not mistaken, and you

are frightened at the thought of the consequences. At the same time you are thinking what a hell of a fine fellow you are. I can see it in your face. You are thinking yourself the hero of a real romance. Well, I'm not going to feed your vanity, if that's what you've come for. It would do you good if the man gave you a sound drubbing and whipped the offending Adam out of you. But I don't suppose it will come to that. The man only suspects and does not know, since he has asked his wife to forbid you the house. The best advice I can give you is to go away and forget her, if your vanity will let you. The woman will, I've no doubt, get over the affair."

"You are very unjust to me, Sholes." The bookseller smiled enigmatically. Randall caught the smile. "Yes, Sholes, you are. I've given her the best there was in me to give."

"Pish! Don't talk that rubbish to me. You've given her only what you liked to give her, and what any man *likes* to give is rarely his best. You've just been having a good time. It may be a more serious matter with her. In that case she'll find you out, now that a separation is imminent. If she won't let you go, it's because she wants to be assured of her faith in you. And you can't satisfy her because you've got all you wanted. She may fear that, too, because she's given you everything. You've given her nothing, except kisses and the poems she gave you the soul to write."

Randall looked at the bookseller in astonishment. The man had read him like an open book,

and had painted a faithful impressionistic picture of the very scene he had last had with her. How could he know it?

"I cannot deny," he said to the bookseller, "what you say. You humble me; but I'm not as bad as you make me out to be. I could not have been to her what I have been, if I'd been as mean as you say I am. And you can't know what I've been to her."

"Randall, I'm much older than you are, which means that I, too, have lived a life. I don't want to talk to you about myself—that would be a waste of time. You say that you are not as bad as I make you out to be. My dear boy we're all worse than others make us out to be—and—a little better. Just now your worse side is showing itself. You are young and good looking, and you cannot resist the temptation to give free play to yourself. You are a power—youth and beauty are nature's most powerful forces—and you have in addition the gift of song. You are an artist, which means that you are always ready to use anything and anybody. Do you know of any compound more dangerous to the peace of our middle-class society than this of yours? I don't."

Sholes saw Randall's face overspreading with an almost beatific expression of self-complacency. He took no notice, seemingly, and went on:

"You are just the very fellow to flutter the dovecote of a half-cultured Suburbia. Ah! I thought I'd make you squirm. You'd be a great success among the women of New York, if what I know of that place is true. Just now you are

piping your woodnotes wild in a very devil of mischief-making spirit. I suppose you really can't help doing it, and you must go on to the sweet or bitter end. Let's hope it won't be very bitter. It won't be to you; but it may be to those who are snared by your pretty face and your siren's voice."

"Why should the end not be sweet? Isn't love the only thing in life worth living for?"

"Love! Ah, my boy, what do you know of love yet? You are only feeling the prickings of the little god. Read your sonnets ten years hence and then you'll realize how little you knew of love. You're not interested in cultivating an orchard, you're too busy eating the ripe fruits of other people's orchards. I don't say you are utterly depraved in doing this. Nature wastes a great deal in the spring time to produce her autumnal harvests. But some one must pay the price for a dissipation of energy. If you don't, and I don't think you will, then your married woman must. Whatever you've been to her it must end in unhappiness. No one can come between a husband and wife with impunity. But she has had her joy, and that may help her to bear her agony. Unfortunately a woman suffers more under our social laws than a man. When she transgresses she is made to bear the man's as well as her own burden of punishment. Forget yourself, and think of her. Leave her to her husband. She'll suffer; but such suffering is as nothing in comparison with what she will be compelled to endure if you remain."

"And yet you tell me I am selfish! Would I

not be utterly selfish to go away and leave her to suffer alone?"

Sholes smiled whimsically.

"She'll suffer more with you now. The fire in you for her is gone out. Your fear tells me that. It is quenched utterly. You don't deceive me, and you won't deceive her. She'll see soon enough that she is sitting at a cold hearth. No, there's nothing for it but to leave her. It's a miserable business, at best; but it will be better for her and —better for you."

"How better for me?"

"You see, you think of yourself, first. I hope it will be better for you. I hope that the separation may hurt you enough to make you suffer. The more you suffer, the more the artist in you will use that experience for creative work, and you may then perhaps, accomplish something worthy. That's nature's way. As for her, well—she must bear it as best she can; but if she's the woman you think she is, the suffering will make a better woman of her. I can say no more."

"Is there no other way?"

"There's always another way; but I'm showing you the best way."

"He has written me a letter."

"Who?—her husband?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you speak of it before?"

"I intended you to see it. It was the letter that made me come to you this morning. Here it is, read it."

Sholes slowly unfolded the paper and read the signature first. He looked up surprised.

"John Whately! He's a customer of mine." Randall made no reply. The bookseller read the letter through slowly and with great care. When he had finished it, he turned to Randall and said quickly:

"A fine letter, written by a gentleman. The writer of that letter is no fool, and knows more than you give him credit for. Have you answered it?"

"No, I didn't know what to say. It took the wind out of my sails. It made me feel so small."

"I'm glad of that. It's a letter not easy to answer. You must let me think it over until to-night. Come back after closing hours and we'll talk it over. You might bring that Lamb manuscript with you. I'd like to look at it again. In the meantime, I'll keep the letter, if you'll allow me, until then."

"Certainly; I'll be here at six."

"Good. I'm going out to my lunch now. William! William! where is that imp of Satan? Oh, here you are! William, I'll be back in an hour or so. Keep a sharp eye on the shop, do you hear?"

"Yes, sir."

"And watch any parson that may come in—particularly if he wears a big overcoat."

"Yes, sir"; the boy's voice was like a distant fog-horn in sound.

Sholes lifted the top of the desk and dropped

the letter inside it. The boy stood eyeing him with a grin on his heavy, freckled face.

Randall and the bookseller had no sooner passed out than the boy ducked his red head beneath the desk. In a moment he had emerged with a large orange and an apple in his hands. Then curling himself up in the chair, he took a book from under his jacket and, munching an apple, was absorbed in reading.

A loud scratching beneath the desk caused him to turn his head. His eye caught sight of a couple of mice nibbling at some apple pips near the fender. Raising his book he took slow aim and shot it at them. A crash, a scutter, and the boy was on the floor after his book which now lay shorn of one of its covers. Rising with the book in his hand he struck his head a smart bump against the desk. With an ugly scowl, he stood looking at the offending piece of furniture, rubbing his sore scalp. "Golly, that was a nasty one," he muttered, giving the desk a kick. Suddenly he stopped rubbing.

"Golly, I wonder what's in that letter." Sholes's act came back to his memory.

Opening the flap, he ducked his head in and emerged with the letter in his hand. He wasted no time in unfolding it. His eye caught the signature, and he stared at it, open-mouthed.

"Oh, crikey, if it ain't from old Cocky Four Eyes; my old master. And it's to Mr. Randall!" He placed his book on the desk and, leaning against the mantelpiece set himself to decipher the somewhat old-fashioned script.

"Is Mr. Sholes in?" A voice, bell-like in quality, pierced the misty air and the boy jumped back as if struck. He looked up with open mouth and fearful face and saw a beautiful lady smiling graciously near him. In the fright which had seized him he had dropped the letter.

"Is Mr. Sholes in?" the musical voice repeated.

"No, ma'am." The boy had managed to find his breath.

"Will he be long away?"

"No, ma'am he's gone out to his lunch." He stood staring at the pretty face as if unable or unwilling to move.

"Then I will wait. May I sit here?"

The boy nodded mechanically, still gazing at her and now with openly admiring eyes. He saw what was to him a richly dressed woman, small, very pretty, with large, alluring brown eyes. An older person would have been drawn by the tender and sweet expression in the eyes and round the child-like full lips. She smiled at the boy standing before her drinking in the vision, and the smile sent a delightful quiver through him. He grinned back, and then drew in his lips with a sucking sound. Her face grew cold immediately while a faint look of repulsion came into her eyes. She turned her head aside. The boy still stood staring with his fists clenched. Suddenly he stiffened. The sound of coming steps made him turn, and he disappeared in the foggy passage to attend to the customer.

Left alone, she shuddered slightly, and allowed her eyes to wander round the fireside. Bending

forward to warm her gloved hands at the fire she saw the letter lying near the fender. She looked at it for a moment, and then the muscles in her face tightened. She had recognized her husband's writing. Stooping she took the letter up and saw that it was addressed to Mr. Randall. Without the slightest hesitation she read it through deliberately and carefully. She sat there, letter in hand, immovable for some seconds, then with a low moan fell back as if struck by a blow. When she opened her eyes again she became aware that someone was pushing her shoulders. With a painful effort she turned her head and saw the fear-stricken face of the red-headed boy near her in agony of suspense.

"Oh, ma'am did you faint?" he rumbled in his thick voice. "You did frighten me."

She smiled wanly. "A little water, please," she whispered. The boy went but returned quickly with a dripping glass. She took it, trembling, and sipped slowly. She remembered now. The letter! Where was it? She looked beggingly at the boy.

"The letter?" she breathed.

"I've put it back in the desk," the boy answered.

She nodded with a contented little sigh. "Thank you," she said gently, holding out the glass to the boy, "I'm much better." The boy turned, glass in hand, when a shadow blotted out the faint daylight which came in through the shop's door. Hurriedly he placed the glass on a shelf.

"Here's Mr. Sholes, ma'am," he whispered hoarsely.

"Now then, William," Sholes's voice came from

the distance, "run and get your dinner, and be back in an hour, do you hear?"

"Yes, sir," the boy roared out. Seizing his book and stuffing it beneath his jacket, he vanished behind the counter.

Sholes strode up, hat in hand, and placed it on its accustomed shelf. Turning to the fireplace to sit down he stopped short at the sight of the woman sitting there. She had been watching him, so that their eyes met. She smiled.

"Mr. Sholes, I believe."

The bookseller bowed slightly and awkwardly. He faced her, leaning against the desk. The gaslight falling upon her showed him the appealing expression on the white, tired face, the sweet and plaintive curves of the sensitive mouth, and the eyes deer-like in their timidity of outlook. His pulse beat more quickly. He knew instinctively that this was the woman whose fate he had been called upon by Randall to decide. A wave of pity for her welled up in him, though his face was as impassive as ever.

"Can I be of any service to you?" he asked gently.

"I expected to meet Mr. Randall here. I am Mrs. Whately. My husband, I think is a customer of yours." Her voice had regained its silver tones, but they rang mournfully in his ears, like the faint sound of distant sledge-bells.

"I know your husband very well. We have had many a pleasant chat together, here. He is a fine scholar."

Her eyes softened and the deepening smile

brought charming dimples to the colorless, satin-like cheeks.

"Mr. Randall was here this morning. He left me an hour ago, to go home."

A shadow emphasized the sad expression on the girlish face. Sholes noted it and noted also the trembling of the lower lip.

"I am very anxious to see him to-day. I had an appointment with him this morning, but as he failed to keep it, I began to be afraid something had happened to him. He never——" She broke off suddenly, her face crimsoning.

"He is quite well; a little worried, perhaps."

The delicate suède-gloved hands in the silken lap of her dress clasped and unclasped. Sholes turned and lifted up the flap of the desk. Good! The letter was still there. He closed the desk softly. She had seen his act and, forgetting that he could not be aware of her knowledge of his possession of the letter, she became filled with mingled fear and indignation. She made an effort to rise, but, suddenly remembering, she sank heavily back overcome by her emotion. Sholes turned at the sound and saw her distress.

"You are ill, Mrs. Whately! Can I do anything?"

"I'm rather tired—that is all. Thank you, no. But I'm afraid I am interrupting you in your business."

The remark, though quite casually made, served as a happy interpretation of his act of opening the desk.

"Not at all."

"Then may I sit awhile? It is very restful here by your quaint fireside."

"By all means. I am grateful for company. A bookseller's days are often very dull."

She smiled, and the smile touched Sholes by its sweet pathos.

"You are very kind," she said, and added, "Yes, I suppose not many people 'shop' for books. But you must have frequent visits from collectors like my husband or Mr. Randall?"

"Yes, but their visits are angel's visits." A short pause followed which she broke.

"Mr. Sholes, may I ask you a question?"

Sholes looked startled for a moment, but added: "Certainly."

"What do you think of Mr. Randall?"

The question was so unexpected that it hit him like a blow. He recovered himself, however, quickly, and with easy nonchalance, said smiling:

"Randall! Oh, he is a pretty boy—only a boy. He's interesting though, very, but—the world is a long way in front of him."

"You are not very enthusiastic. His friends think he is a genius. Have you read his poems? Some people think they are as good as Keats."

"I wouldn't go so far as that. There's no doubt he has unusual talent; but his poems show plainly he has had no experience of life. He's too young." The woman blushed and looked down.

"He's precocious," continued Sholes, "but precocity is not often an indication of genius. For one Keats or Burns there are a thousand Macaulays,

and Macaulay, remarkably precocious as he was, was anything but a genius."

"But Mr. Randall isn't a bit like Macaulay, Mr. Sholes. Macaulay was a commonplace Englishman. Mr. Randall is a poet, with all a poet's artistic temperament."

Sholes was convinced that she had come for a purpose, and that Randall was that purpose. It might, however, be possible, he thought, to bring Randall to his senses, through her. At any rate, the effort was worth making.

"It's the commonplace Englishman, madam, who made English what she is. Poets are not nation makers. As for their artistic temperament, we must be careful how we treat it. If we are to take them at their word, all young men with artistic temperaments are geniuses—the woods are full of them."

"Are you not rather hard on Mr. Randall?"

"I was not thinking of him particularly. But since you single him out I will say of him what I say of them all—he must convince the world before he asks it to accept him as one of the elect. He must conquer it by his work, and he can only do that by being left to live his life his own way. If he's got the right stuff in him, it will come out. It's a mistake—a very great mistake—to coddle genius—to rate it too highly at the first indication of talent."

"The world doesn't err in that respect. What would become of the genius if nobody appreciated him? He'd starve, body and soul."

"That's true; but it's better he should starve—

better for him, and better for the world. That is part of his training; the experience ripens him."

"Would you then condemn him to suffering?"

"No; but I would make sure first that he was worth saving. If I were to open my house to all who write sonnets and wear long hair, I'd have to sleep in my backyard myself."

She smiled. "How can you be sure?" she asked. "Is it not better to help and encourage than to deny and dishearten, even if one makes mistakes?"

"If you are willing to take the consequences, yes; but the genius is a very reckless fellow—he will break your heart and think he has mended it by writing a lyric."

"Do you include Mr. Randall in that class?" she asked in a strained, anxious voice.

"I do, for in addition to his pretty gift of verse-making he has the pretty gift of good looks. That's a dangerous combination in a young man. He is a veritable menace to the public peace—and the private peace, also," he added slowly.

Sholes watched her shiver under the blow of his remark. He was sorry he had struck so hard, now that he saw how deeply it affected her. Poor girl! Evidently Randall had sung his songs to her and she had been converted as well as flattered. No doubt, she thought herself walking the sunlit heights with him—another Laura to this English Petrarch.

"You must have been unfortunate in those you met, to speak as you do." She spoke with a gentle sadness of tone.

"I have not met many; but I do know that the artistic temperament, as we call it, is too often but a fine cloak in which to hide a very ragged spirit. At best it's a vagrant spirit. It is a wind that bloweth where it listeth. I have found that it thrives best under discipline. He's a poor friend to genius that would force it with the heat of flattery and adulation."

"But, surely, Mr. Sholes, you don't think Mr. Randall is of the class of ragged spirits, as you call them?"

"No, I don't; but he has their temperament, and the temperament is an anti-social one. It's selfish and reckless of what it does so long as it gains its own ends. Besides, we make a mistake when we think we are helping it by sympathy. I have known much unhappiness follow from that course, and I have come to the conclusion it is really our duty to be hard with such men."

"Then you think that sympathy and appreciation would harm Mr. Randall?"

"I do. I believe in him; but just because of that I must be very critical of what he does. I should not be his friend, otherwise." She nodded understandingly.

"I am glad you have so high an opinion of him. It must be a great help to have you for a friend."

Sholes smiled. He was satisfied he had gained an advantage. "I am afraid," he said, "he sometimes finds me trying."

"Oh, but I know he values your friendship very highly. He has often spoken to me of you and of your goodness to him."

"Well, I'm rather interested in seeing him develop."

"I am interested in him, too, Mr. Sholes. Indeed, it was partly on that account that I took the liberty of coming here. I hope you won't misunderstand me."

Her face had taken on a charming, petitioning look. He melted before its sweet pleading.

"I am glad to learn that. Your interest in him cannot be otherwise than helpful. But you will have to step carefully. A woman's interest in a young man's future is apt to enervate him. Pardon me, for speaking so plainly."

Her face was a blown pink rose. She looked down at her hands and saw their fingers twisting helplessly. Realizing that she was betraying herself she summoned all her strength and, clasping her fingers tightly, she looked up smilingly and said, as steadily as she could:

"You are quite right. It is difficult to know what is best to do. You are very wise, Mr. Sholes, and very kind. I—I wish we had met earlier." She paused out of lack of breath from the stress of emotion. Then recovering herself quickly, she added, "I might have been of greater help to him than I have been. It is not easy, as you know, to judge, where one's sympathies are engaged."

Sholes saw the pure soul of the sorrow-laden woman in her eyes. The sight so affected him that he dug his finger-nails into the wooden desk.

"My dear Mrs. Whately," his voice was enriched with his emotion, "it is always difficult to

be wise where one's affections are engaged." She noted the new word. "That is my difficulty with Randall. I want him to succeed, because I feel sure he will do big things, and the world has need of men who can do big things. But the man destined to greatness, must fight his fight alone."

"You think, then, he should go out into the world, and take his chance."

"Exactly. Indeed, that is what I have been urging him to do this very morning, but he is unwilling to take the leap."

Her gentle eyes glowed as from an inward fire. Sholes saw the glow and it sent a hope springing in his breast. Surely that glow was the dawn of Randall's day of freedom. He waited anxiously for her answer. When it came it confirmed him.

"I will add my persuasions to your urgings, Mr. Sholes, it may be that two can do where one failed."

"If you do, then I shall have no doubt at all of his future."

She rose slowly, and extending her hand, said:

"You have been very kind to allow me to take up so much of your time. I am very grateful to you. Won't you call on us some evening? My husband, I am sure, will be pleased."

"Thank you; I may take you at your word."

"Do. Good-afternoon."

"Good-afternoon." He held her hand a brief second. "I shall be honored whenever you call again."

She smiled wearily, and turning away her pathetically sad eyes, stepped slowly out.

A murky blackness had taken the place of the brief, misty daylight. Sholes lit a couple of gas jets and peered behind the counter for the boy. "William," he called, "damn that red-headed Caliban! I suppose he won't be back now. Gone down to the docks, as usual. Well, I'm glad he didn't come back." Returning to the fireside he opened the desk, took out the letter and read it once more.

"An unusual letter, but a fine spirit all through it," he muttered as he placed it in his coat pocket. He stood with foot on fender and head bent staring at the fire, absorbed in reflections over the day's strange happenings. Poor woman, poor woman! There was not a doubt of him in her mind. Sholes continued to stare at the fire utterly unconscious of either time or place. Memory had come back to him. He saw himself a young man again, walking the hedge-lined lanes with a woman. The old, old story. He had somehow lived through his own agonies. What puppets young men are in the grip of this passion of love! What fools we are to think we can harness the mightiest of nature's forces in the ribbons of ordinary convention and drive the car of life with them! He shivered. Yes, he must make Randall clear out. He must not remain to ruin that great-hearted woman's life, and ruin his own, too. He would press him to the last stand. With a sigh he raised his head and passed his hands through the thick hair. The sound of footsteps caused him to turn towards the entrance to the shop; he stood waiting.

"Here I am Sholes—prompt to the minute."

Sholes looked at Randall as though he didn't see him. A momentary feeling of revulsion had seized him as he caught sight of the small, selfish smiling mouth; but he quickly repressed it. With a heavy step forward he greeted the young man.

"I'm very glad you've come," he said, his baritone voice deepened to its lower tones, "put some coals on the fire while I turn out the lights and lock up."

A few minutes later, Randall and the bookseller sat facing each other at the fireside. The single gas jet above the mantelpiece flared darkly yellow in the thick misty atmosphere of the foggy evening in which the forms of the two men were enfolded. Sholes lit a cigar and puffed at it slowly.

"Did you bring the Lamb manuscript?" he asked.

"Yes, here it is."

"Good." He examined it carefully, fingering each leaf. "I'll give you the ten pounds for it, though it's more than I can afford to tie up just now, if you'll do what I'm going to ask you to do."

"What's that?" inquired Randall curiously.

"Pack up your traps, and go up to London to-night."

"London! To-night! Good God, man, I can't do that. I can't leave the office at a moment's notice without an explanation."

"Write the explanation—say anything you like, you've threatened to leave before. I've thought over your situation and the only way out of it I can see is to do what I advise."

"I—I—can't leave her that way."

"It's the only way you will leave her. You go to London to-night and start your life again or, I wash my hands of the matter, and decline to buy the manuscript. You've read his letter. Here it is. Read it again. That man practically begs your clemency. Can you refuse him?"

Randall smirked as he shifted uneasily. The vanity in the man was irrepressible. With a graceful side-turn of his head which would have been repulsive had it not been so evidently natural, he looked at Sholes shyly and said:

"My clemency, as you call it would not help him. She is not the woman he thinks she is. She can't live his life; she has a life of her own to live now."

"Then let her live it. Do you want to show her how to live it? Are you prepared for the consequences?"

"I don't know. I can't say. I'm very much attached to her."

"Attached be hanged! Do you love her so that your life is a blank without her? No, of course, you don't. It's your damnable vanity that won't let you give her up. I wish to God you did love her; there might be some hope for you then."

Sholes's face was marble in its white sternness. The sentimental frills fell away from Randall like blown thistledown. He sat straight up, looking like a bleak stalk.

"You are unjust to me, Sholes. I don't deserve all you say. I want to do what will give her least unhappiness. I would do anything to help her. And yet—there is my own future also."

"What I advise is best for her and best for your own future."

"She will break her heart, if I leave her."

"So you think; but she's more likely to break her husband's heart, if I read that letter aright. And she'll break you without intending to do it."

Randall shook his head with a sad smile. "You don't know her," he said; "she has a beautiful nature and would sacrifice her life for me."

"I see I must be frank with you. Do you care to listen?"

Randall nodded a timid and anxious assent. The bookseller threw the stump of his cigar into the fender, and settled himself back firmly in his chair.

"I am of the firm opinion that you are cut out for the career of letters. There's the making of a writer in you. You have imagination and fancy and the art of expression. You have style also. It would be a pity were you to squander your gifts. But what are you doing with them, cooped up in this stupid provincial town? And what are you doing with yourself tied to a woman's apron-strings—and to a married woman's? Can't you see that you are frittering away the best time of your life? Get away from this town and this woman. London's your field. This town won't miss you, and the woman will not long remember you. Oh, don't smile; she'll get over you. And when she does, she'll be the better for having known you, if she is the woman you say she is. If she's not you'd drag her down to hell, if you stay. This letter of her husband's leaves

you no alternative except to take her or to leave her. If you take her, you must support her—and you can't support yourself. What your lives together will then be I leave you to imagine. If you leave her, you will at least do the one decent thing left to you to do for her husband; and as for her, well, she will suffer, but she will grow through the suffering to be a nobler woman and, perhaps a truer wife. As for you, yourself, you've had the experience, and it may or may not make a man of you. I hope it will. Nay, I am sure it will. You have the poet's soul in you, and the trial may deepen your nature so that it may take upon itself the mystery of things, as Shakespeare so wonderfully expressed it." Sholes paused and look steadily at Randall. "Am I to buy the manuscript on my terms?" he asked, faintly smiling, "or is it to be the Divorce Court?" The last words he shot at him with forward-bending head.

Randall was overcome. He put his hands up before his face and sat bent, the very picture of misery.

"Come, come my lad," and Sholes leaned over to pat his shoulder, "take the ten pounds. It'll be the saving of your life."

Randall raised a tired, drawn, white face. Sholes saw the mouth tremble, and felt a father's pity for the boy as he held the bank-notes toward him.

The young man put them aside with a despairing gesture.

"I can't. I don't know what to think. Give me a week to decide. There's so much to do before I could go, in any case."

"No—it must be now or never. There's nothing to do that you can't do better after you get to London. I'm pressing you, I know; but I've been through this mill myself. I lost my chance through just such waiting in a false hope."

The last words were spoken in so broken and sad a voice that Randall even was moved to forget himself. He looked at the bookseller's face and thought he saw a rift opening darkly in its mask; but the rift must have been a seeming for the next moment the face appeared calm and passionless as ever. It was not Sholes's face, but the magical tones of his voice that had stirred Randall's heart-strings and sent them vibrating to a new music. Sholes saw that he had gained a decided advantage. He determined to make his final attack.

"She was here this afternon," he remarked, quietly.

"Here!" Randall jumped up from his seat with the exclamation. "What did she want? Oh, I know, she came to see if I were here." Then he remembered that Sholes had never met her before. "But how did you know it was she?" he asked, suddenly

"Did you not give me her husband's letter? She introduced herself by name. She expected to meet you here, she said."

"Yes, but I could not see her until I had settled about that letter. Did you have any talk with her? Isn't she beautiful?"

"Yes, she is very charming. We chatted together for quite some time. You see, I was interested in meeting her."

"What do you think of her? I've often wished you could meet her."

"She's very pretty and engaging; but nothing unusual—nothing to rave about."

Sholes grit his teeth as he spoke the denying words, and offered a prayer of pardon to her in his heart.

"Ah, you don't know her. She has a fine mind, and a beautiful nature. And she's an excellent judge of poetry."

"I suppose you mean of your poetry. I'm not surprised. She has had the advantage of your private tuition. Now don't fly off at a tangent. I must have my joke. But, seriously, she's a sick woman. She'll welcome a respite from your heated attentions. You've put on her more than she can bear, and the strain is breaking her."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you have taken her out of her element. You've made her climb with you to an atmosphere that is painful for her to breathe. She's tired—tired of poetry, tired of living with you on the heights, tired of everything, of you, even."

"How do you know that? Did she say so?"

Sholes smiled.

"She didn't have to say it. It was written all over her face. For God's sake, man, leave her alone, if you want her to live at all. She's not of your class. Thank Heaven, there are some women left in the world who do not belong to it. Yes, I mean what I say, and I say it without intending to hurt your feelings. The women of your class must be barren. This woman is made for mother-

hood and the suckling of children. She belongs to a home, not a conservatory. She's one of the builders of peoples, not a pretty grisette to tie a poet's silken scarf. You've made her eat your apples of Hesperides, and they are Dead Sea fruit to her. Be content to let her dream of you. Her dreams will do her more good than your reality. Go to-night, and she will forget you in a week, unless—" and the words fell from Sholes's lips unpremeditatedly—"unless the child she is carrying within her is yours."

Randall fell heavily into the chair and bent double. His act struck Sholes like an earthquake. He had spoken at random, though he had diagnosed the woman's illness. The ground seemed to open suddenly beneath his feet. The shock split, for Sholes, the rock of the young man's stubbornness and, as he stared at the bowed form, he seemed to see the waters of his life gushing forth and drowning him. It was this, then, that had held him back! The subterranean lake lay revealed now. He could see clearly all around it. He even heard the sucking sounds of the black, viscous waves at they lap-lap-lapped the slimy shores. Oh the pity of it; the pity of it!

For many minutes Sholes sat and stared, thinking, thinking. Finally, he shook himself out of his stupor and, placing his hand on Randall's shoulder, said in a quiet, sad voice:

"You should have told me this before."

"I was afraid to at first," came up brokenly, "but I intended you should know before we parted to-night."

"I wish I had known it when she was here to-day. You must be up and away to-night—now, more than ever. Do you hear are? To-night."

"And you still urge me to go?" The words reached him muffled.

"Yes! It's your life against hers. She has lived hers—yours is yet to be lived. Take it in your own hands like a man, or both your lives will be blasted. You can't help her by remaining. Nay, you'll make it harder for her to bear. Rouse yourself, man!"

"I'll feel like a cur, Sholes, like a dirty dog."

"It'll do you good to feel it; but a living cur is worth a hundred dead lions. If you've the stuff of a man in you at all, the waters of this misery will wash the cur in you clean. Don't, for her sake, sentimentalize the situation. Grit your teeth—be hard—and do the seeming coward's act. She'll thank you for it, later, and when you've succeeded she'll be the first to rejoice in your success. Write her from London a short letter, but don't pity her whatever you do, or you'll both dissolve in ineffectual tears. Leave her to fight her own life. The child will help her more than you ever could. It may be her salvation."

"God! God! What have I done?"

"What's the use of thinking over that now. You can't undo it, can you?"

"No, I wish to Heaven I could. I'd give my life to help her—to save her from the misery of it all."

"Give it then. There is only one way to give

your life for hers—by dedicating it to your art. Let her be your inspiration—the glory of your labors. Sing your love for her into your poems, and let her realize it—let her feel that she has not sacrificed herself for nothing. She has given you all she could give. Treasure her gift in the soil of your heart, so that it may grow into the fruit of your art and be a nourishing blessing to others. The woman in her will take joy in that, and it will make her feel that her broken life has not been broken in vain."

"Your medicine, Sholes, is very bitter to the taste. And yet, I don't know what else to do."

"The ills of weakness cannot be cured, they can only be endured by bitter repentance and mighty effort. It's easy to slip down the incline but it's very hard to climb up again. Come, take the money. I'll meet you at the railway station to see you off by the midnight train. Will you be there?"

"You have convinced me there is no alternative." Randall looked up at his friend, and his face showed aged with its dark-rimmed eyes and drawn mouth. "But I can't go to-night. I must see her before I go. I had a note from her just before I left home, in which she begs me to see her early to-morrow morning."

Sholes's face lit up as with a smile of triumph, but the smile quickly disappeared.

"Write her instead."

"But she says she has something very important to say to me."

"I know what she would say to you."

"You know?"

"Yes—she will ask you to do what I am asking of you—to go away."

"How do you know that?"

Sholes smiled. "She told me," he said, quietly.

Randall looked at the bookseller in blank astonishment.

"She told you that she wished me to leave Mereston?" he repeated slowly.

Sholes continued to smile and nodded.

"Come, my boy, don't misjudge her"; he seized Randall's coat by its two lapels and shook him. Then, looking straight into the young man's eyes, he raised his rich voice to a solemn note:

"If you believe in my friendship for you, you must surely believe in her self-sacrificing love."

The words were almost chanted; they sank into Randall who bowed his head, so that it almost lay on Sholes's breast. Slowly he raised his hands and taking hold of both Sholes's he pressed them hard. In a broken voice, he cried:

"I am not worth it, dear friend, I am not worth it." The bookseller's face shone with gladness.

"You will be, my lad. I am certain of that. Send us both an early copy of your first book. It will tell us more than a thousand letters. But we must be going now, if you are to get ready for your journey. Here's the money."

Randall shivered and pocketing the notes, turned groping to the door. Sholes dropped the manuscript into the desk, put out the light, and the two passed out into the black, foggy night.

"I'll be at the station at 11.45." Sholes's words were borne on a wreath of steaming breath.

"I'll be there," Randall mournfully steamed back.

Two long black patches separated in different directions and were dissolved in the fog.

It was a beautiful morning in the late spring following Randall's departure for London. Sholes sat in his accustomed seat in the shop, smoking his post-prandial cigar, and reading the newspaper. Near the door, and hidden by the counter, crouched Caliban William, reading. A nearer view would have shown that his face was cleaner, his hair better trimmed and his clothes more presentable than of old. He seemed to be enjoying the book—Kingsley's "Westward Ho."—and the eager expression on his features imparted a quaint charm to their ungainliness.

"Postman!" A figure darkened the entrance. The boy jumped up alertly and received a small package. Stepping softly, he made his way to where the bookseller sat. He placed the parcel on the desk, and was about to draw Sholes's attention to it, when a cry broke from the bookseller's lips. The boy slipped away quickly and noiselessly; he had seen that set, white face before, and it boded no good.

Sholes was sitting, staring at the paper in his hand, as if paralyzed. Presently he laid the sheet on his knees, and bowed his head on his breast.

"So—so that's the end," he sighed, "God keep her! God keep her!" The mask-like face was drawn and twisted. A tear slipped down the

cheek and was lost in the beard. He took the paper up again and fixed his eyes on a corner of the page:

"April 23rd at Oxberry, Alison Whately, aged 25 years, beloved wife of John Whately, in childbirth."

"After life's fitful fever, she sleeps well," he muttered.

He rose from his seat and, leaving the paper lying on it, turned to lean against the desk, when his eye caught sight of the parcel. Mechanically, he cut the string which bound it and, removing the brown paper wrapper, took out a book. With the instinct born of his trade, he turned to the title-page:

"A Life for a Life: A Sonnet Sequence. By Stuart Randall." He turned the leaves idly.

"I wonder if it's worth the price," he murmured.

"ANY VINDERS TO MEND?"

A grassy bank, a shading tree,
  A rippling brook that murmurs low,
With just a sigh as of the sea
  The wind breathes where the rushes grow.

A golden mist by sunlight spread
  Of which I build my castles fair,
Green whisp'ring leaves above my head
  Which messages from heaven bear.

Here I lie my heart enchanted;
  Yet question why the needs of man
Bar the aims of those God granted
  Souls to aspire His ways to plan.

All our strivings through the ages
  Since first Lord Jesus loved and taught,
Still finds us delving for mere wages,
  In economic prisons caught.

Grass and trees and murmuring streams
  And airs washed golden by the sun,
Are now but stuff for poets' dreams,
  To labor lost, and rarely won.

Yet gold of sun and song of brook
  Have magic gifts our days to dower,
Which never gods from anvils struck,
  And ever wait our spirits' hour.

"ANY VINDERS TO MEND?"

THE street-criers of cities are rarely heard now, even in London, where the airs of the various seasons were once musical with their calls. "Trade's unfeeling train" has usurped the land and dispossessed these picturesque swains of their ancient rights and privileges, and the warblers have long since migrated to where blow kinder airs. I suppose the modern newspaper, with its tradesmen's advertisements, is a better guide and helper than was the itinerant cobbler or the traveling tinker; yet I cannot help feeling a regret that these peripatetic peddlers no longer play their part in the dramas of life.

I recall these acquaintances of my boyhood as I sit listening to the bells that are chiming in the new year, because it was on the eve of a new year that I first met one of these criers of the streets whose beneficent influence on my life is still an abiding force. I remember as though it were but yesterday that cold December afternoon, as I sat by the window watching the snowflakes falling, hearing a voice in the street cry: "Any vinders to mend? Any vinders to me-end?" I peered into the greying dusk, and saw a man standing in the middle of the road, his head raised, his hands held funnel-wise to his mouth. On his back was strapped a wooden crate loaded with squares of glass. My mother bade me call the man in to

repair one of the panes in a kitchen window which had long needed a glazier's attention.

The poor fellow was stiff from the cold and seemed very grateful for the permission granted him to warm his hands over the fire. He excused himself for the odor that came from his clothes, which, he explained, was due to the oil in the putty with which they were smeared. I noticed that his features were remarkably distinguished, unlike those of any Jew I had seen before. The nose was straight, with finely chiseled nostrils, and the face clean shaven except for a short, bushy mustache that gave him something of a foreign military air. He had taken off his greasy cap on entering the room, and I was struck by the beautiful white forehead which shone below the closely cropped grisly hair in the gas-light. I was deeply interested to see him at work, especially when he began to cut the glass to size with a small instrument he called a diamond.

"Are you a Jew?" I asked with a boy's impertinence, as he stood softening the putty before the fire. He nodded his head, with an amused look.

"Were you born in Palestine?"

He laughed.

"No," he said; "I was born in Warsaw." He pronounced it "Varshaw."

"Where is that?"

"In Poland. It is the capital of that country."

"Do you like being a glazier?"

"I must like it. I have to earn a living."

"Were you a glazier in Varshaw?"

I have never forgotten the look he gave me. Instinctively, I realized, though I was only a boy, that I had made a mistake.

"My little lad," he said sternly, "you seem to be a nice boy, but I will take the liberty to say to you that it is not to be a gentleman to be too inquisitive. In Poland we are gentlemen."

He spoke with difficulty and with a strong foreign accent. I hung my head in shame at his words.

"You are a good boy," he said in a changed voice, and patted me with his putty-smeared hand. "It is the part of a gentleman to ask pardon when he has done wrong, and I see you are sorry. We are friends again, are we not?"

Smiling, I looked up at him, and he nodded his head, satisfied, as he turned to finish his task. My mother came in to pay him, and she asked if he would drink a cup of tea to keep him warm on his way home. He looked at her for a moment as if to search for her motive, and then he bowed politely. It would give him great pleasure, he said, to accept her hospitality; "but in my country," he explained, "we drink tea *à la Russe,* in a glass, with lemon and lump sugar, and I still keep to the custom here." He drank not one, but several glasses, and enjoyed the steaming brew hugely. I tried to drink a glass with him, but I had difficulty in keeping the sugar in my mouth unmelted. This amused him greatly and afforded him the opportunity to give a lesson in this form of tea-drinking. Thus began my friendship with Leon Wiener, the Polish exile, a

friendship which, though it is ended in the body, will continue in the spirit as long as I live. On leaving he begged I would visit him in his humble lodging, so that he might have the pleasure of returning the hospitality he had enjoyed in my home. I promised eagerly, and I still possess the piece of paper, greased with putty, with his pencilled address on it.

Very humble indeed was the third-story attic in which I found him one Saturday afternoon in January; but the room was spotlessly clean, and the little fire-grate flamed very invitingly. On a table near the hearth stood a gleaming brass samovar steaming merrily. He did the duties of host in a manner at once so dignified and kindly that I felt I was a person of importance being entertained at a feast. He was quite changed in his appearance. In place of the tired, greasy workman I had previously met, I now saw a neatly dressed gentleman of distinction who might have passed for an army officer in mufti. Tea served, he began by inquiring about my studies, and when I told him I had just graduated into the higher classes, he said:

"You must learn French. That is the one language which a gentleman must know. The French are the only people in the world who know how to live. English-speaking people cannot understand them, because they take life too seriously and think the French are frivolous. But they are far from being frivolous; they are just happy as children are happy. They have been taught by suffering that happiness is all that life means. They are happy also because they are brave, for all brave people are

glad to be alive. This is the first lesson you must learn my boy, because God made you that you should be glad He made you. A great Jewish philosopher, Baruch Spinosa, said, 'A free man fears nothing less than death,' and the French will teach you the meaning of that splendid thought. Ah, if I had not been born a Pole, I would have thanked God to be born a Frenchman, to have nursed my soul at the breast of France, that daughter of History bred in Romance! But we Poles are very like Frenchmen. We like to eat good food, to drink fine wines, to dance our mazurkas, to fight against oppression and tyranny, to love our women, and to honor our parents. It will always be well with the land where the children reverence their fathers and mothers. Your mother is a gracious lady. Never forget that, and the memory of her will be as a guiding star to you in the journey of your life." He paused, and took a long drink.

"Have you ever heard of Pushkin? No, of course not. How could you? Well, Pushkin is our great Slav poet, who has written the most beautiful songs in praise of women and home and country. I wish you could understand the language, for I would recite some of his poems to you. Then there is Turgenieff, the Russian novelist, and Sienkiewicz, Poland's great writer of historical romances, and Krasinski, the historian of Poland. Some day you will read their books, but Pushkin can never be translated; never. His songs are like the droppings of honeycombs on a bright summer's day. Will you have another glass of tea? It will do you no harm, and it is a great pleasure to me to have you

here to talk to. You have unloosed the streams of a memory that circumstance has held frozen for many years. It is like being at home again. Ah, I see you would like to know more of me and my country, not so? I know you are inquisitive. Ha! ha! ha! Pardon, that I remind you of your *faux pas*. But it is different now. *Nu;* so you shall listen while an old man talks."

Then he told me a strange tale of a revolution, of fighting in the cause of Poland's freedom from Russian oppression, of defeat, and of his flight for his life. He had possessed a great estate, and he dwelt lovingly on its beauties and the happiness he had known there; but all had been lost, and he was now an exile. He spoke of his travels, of the people he had met, of the trials he had suffered, of his hopes of the future. He told it all very simply and only after many questionings from me. I learned then the details of his escape over the frozen snows in long sleigh-rides on frosty nights, with the bells tinkling round the horses' necks. I seemed to be listening to a romance as I sat by the fireside sipping my lemon tea, trying to realize those wonderful happenings in a world of which I could form no idea.

"It is all gone, and will never be again," he said with a plaintive note in his voice, and a smile. "I am only a glazier now. I can say with Leonardo da Vinci, 'While I thought I was learning how to live, I have been learning how to die.' But I should do it all over again—for Poland's sake." His face took on a rapt expression as he raised his eyes to the skylight window in the low ceiling. The next

moment, however, he was himself again. "Let us drink a toast!" He stood up, and placing one hand on his hip, he lifted his glass high, "To the memory of Kosciuszko!" I repeated the words after him, though I knew not what they meant.

"Who was Kosciuszko?" I asked, with a smile.

"Ah, I forgot you were only a boy. I will tell you about him another day. Will you not honor me with your company next Saturday? You shall hear all about Kosciuszko then."

I promised to come.

"Good; and now it is time for you to go back to your dear mother. Tell her that I have enjoyed your society exceedingly. That is my message to her, and she will understand. *Au revoir,* then, my young friend. I can see we shall be great—how do you call it?—chums. Is not that the right word? But remember."—and he held up a warning finger, —"never tell a lie, and always wear clean linen."

As I walked away I could not help speculating as to what he could mean by advising me about my linen. I was sure it was clean, for I had changed only that morning. I asked my mother about it when I got home, and she smiled.

"I expect," she said, "the people he meets now are not very particular in that matter. But ask him to explain on your next visit."

The following Saturday, when we were seated by the fireside with the samovar between us, I put my question, and told him the explanation my mother had given.

"Your mother grows in my estimation the more I know of her," he said, laughing. "She is quite

right. The world I live in now is very different from the world I once knew. Clean linen is the one luxury left me by which I keep my mind in tune with the dignity of my heart. We may not be able always to afford fine clothes, but we can always afford clean linen, even if we have to wash it ourselves, and clean linen is a sign of good breeding. And now to Kosciuszko, shall we?"

It was not until years later that I understood fully what he told me then of Poland's patriot and Poland's struggle for independence. His narrative was so interspersed with long explanations of events entirely unfamiliar to me, and he named such strange-sounding names, that I was very little the wiser as to the true inwardness of the whole business. But I carried away with me, none the less, an exalted sense of the rare nobility of a human life, of its unselfish devotion to a pure ideal, of the charm and loveableness of a great character. And I am sure now that this was all that my friend intended I should feel. He hoped, he said, that I, too, would keep the lamp of liberty burning when I should have learned how to trim its wick.

I visited him frequently for two or three years, during the whole of which time he was both my mentor and friend. He helped me with my studies, enriching the meager information of my schoolbooks with commentaries and narratives that seemed to come from him as from an inexhaustible fountain. I am not able to recall many of the details of these conversations, but the memory of them arouses in me now the same sensations as of a new enlightenment I then experienced after each visit I paid

him. He rarely touched on religion. Only once do I remember his making a reference to it, when I showed him a prettily bound New Testament in French that a relative had sent me on my sixteenth birthday. He held the little volume tenderly as he turned its leaves for some moments in silence.

"Ah," he said musingly, "that book makes me proud of being a Jew. Study it well, for there are truths in it which will not be understood for many generations to come." Then, as he handed the book back to me, he added: "They say he claimed to be the Messiah, but that is not true. There is only one Messiah, and he is always with us—in our own hearts."

A year later I went up to college, so that my meetings with Leon Wiener were necessarily broken off. We saw each other, however, during my vacations, when he continued to be the same dear friend I had always found him; very eager to know all about my work, very curious as to what I was reading, asking many questions as to the young men I was meeting, the friendships I was making, and the tutors under whom I was studying. He urged me over and over again to pay special attention to the study of history and economics, two subjects, he said solemnly, to which I could not give too much time. One of my last meetings with him was on the evening of the attempted assassination of Emperor Nicholas II of Russia. I found him in a state of unusual excitement, walking up and down his garret, gesticulating, and cracking his finger-joints.

"A thousand pities! a thousand pities!" he kept

exclaiming. "I have told Stepniak and Krapotkin again and again that this is the wrong way, that this is the one way to bring the cause to ruins about us. They tried it with Alexander the Second, and nothing came of it, and now they are at it again. O Russia, Russia, thou hast too much heart and too little head!"

"How is it possible," I asked, "for the Russian people to throw off the Romanoff yoke and successfully maintain a democracy when the great mass of them have just been released from serfdom? Liberty must become a national religion, so to speak, before it can be established in institutions."

"You are right; but that is not the vital question for Russia. You speak as a theorist and a student; but the situation in Russia must be dealt with by those who know the actual conditions there. Ask rather, How is it possible for the Russian people to throw off the yoke of Prussia? There lies the problem, and it is a hard one to solve; because the leaders of Russian enlightenment, who have been educated by German socialists, do not see the deep Machiavellian policy which is behind the German Government's relations with Russia. They think that the German socialists mean to carry out all they teach and preach; they do not realize that these socialists can and will do nothing, because they have been born and trained in the school of Prussian militarism. They do not see that Germany has a yoke of her own, the heaviest and most debilitating of all yokes, that of a military autocracy, to throw off before the socialists can do anything. They do know that the Russian reigning

family has been thoroughly Germanized,—the process began with Catharine the Great,—but they do not know that Russia's bureaucracy and Russia's commercial and industrial enterprises are all in the hands of Germans, and therefore subject to Prussia's will. Study the life of the Empress Catharine, and you will have revealed to you the real nature of the Prussian dynastic family. She was the rampant, unbridled Teuton. That's the stuff that rules Germany to-day. Look at the treatment given the Jews in Russia. That is not of the spirit of the genuine Russian, who is a gentleman and bears a kind heart. It is the outcome of that *Judenhetze* which sprang from Germany. The Russian people must and will achieve freedom some day, but it will be only when they realize that they have been fooled by Prussian intrigue. And when Russia obtains her freedom, Poland will also be a nation once again. I know the Prussian only too well; my name betrays the taint of his blood. I have lived with him and seen the true nature that he covers with his bluff and smiling exterior, and it is bestial. He wears fine clothes, but the linen next his skin is dirty, and his heart is false. I will not live to see the day, but you will, and mark my words, Europe will then lie stricken to death because of his insatiable passion for power and his ruthlessness to obtain it. Napoleon regretted he had not destroyed the nation, and the world will echo his regret. But why do I talk? I have lived my life, and there is nothing left for me now but to mend broken windows."

'Pan Wiener," I said, "you have mended the

windows of minds as well as of houses. Let us forget this sad business in a glass of tea. The spirit of Kosciuszko still lives and will never die."

"You are right, my dear friend, and I thank you for reminding me of that great soul. It is good for the heart to keep it warm with love."

I left him with his promise to go for a walk with me into the country. That country ramble stands out in my memory as one of the events of my life. The day was warm and blue and golden, the very air seemed spangled with sunlight, and the lanes were leafy aisles filled with the incense of flowers.

"Ah, how much we miss who live in cities!" he exclaimed, as he stopped by a bunch of honeysuckles on a hedge. "It is many years since I have breathed the life-giving airs of the open fields and heard the songs of happy birds. We who are compelled to live by the labor of our hands are rarely permitted to look up and around; we can only look down for the next mouthful of grass, like the oxen in the meadows. Still, our hearts have their eyes also, and we can look up with them. Our cities are barren places, and would be unbearable if we did not look with our hearts to find the brave and aspiring souls who keep on loving and hoping while they are working, and, who, like these flowers of the fields, fill the dreary wastes of the streets with the perfume of their natures. They are God's human flowers, and they are growing even in the slums and Ghettos. My friend, never give way to the temptation to become a cynic; for that way lie misery and death. God's way is the way of life

through love and the joy that comes from the dignity of simple being. Here"—and he spread his arms abroad—"here is God's way, where you see flowers blooming, birds singing, trees and grass growing to ripeness, and you and I walking in consciousness of the beauty and the loving-kindness of it all. It will be likewise in cities some day, but that day will come the sooner if we, who live in them now, will bear a friendly hand and open the treasure-houses of our divinely gifted minds to all in the spirit of comradeship. That is the meaning of liberty, as it is of the brotherhood of man, about which so many have said so much. You will pardon an old man for talking to himself aloud, but this beauty has made me a little sad. It is so full of life, and I am no longer what I was. That inn in the distance looks inviting; shall we rest there and drink a glass of tea?"

I lay awake that night filled with the emotions my friend had aroused in me. It seemed as if I had been walking and talking with a visitor from another world, who had stayed just long enough to bless me, and had then departed never to return. I had long since given up speculating about him, for I knew that to do that was to lose his charm and to deny myself the enjoyment of the rare fruits of thought with which he bountifully fed my mind. I accepted him as I did the day's sunlight or the changes of the seasons, so that he became a part of my life. His companionship was a benediction, and his speech a magic music that lifted me on the mounting pinions of its thought. What was it in our economic system that con-

demned such a man to walk the stony ways merely to keep soul and body together?

The next morning I went up to college, and did not see my friend until the Christmas vacation. When I called on him again I thought he was looking greatly aged. His face was pinched and grey, and his clothes hung loosely about him. But he had lost nothing of his debonair gaiety, and he still drank his lemon tea as though it were the rarest of vintages. We spent some unforgettable evenings together when the old spirit in him flamed as brightly as ever. He had moved to a cheaper lodging, for he found he was no longer able to ply his trade in bad weather. The shining samovar steamed as brightly as ever, and if the fire in the tiny grate did not flame as brightly as it once did, he made up for it by the fire in his eyes when he warmed to his thoughts. I had brought him a box of choice Havanas as a Christmas gift, and his enjoyment of the aroma, as he blew the smoke appreciatingly from his lips, brought up a lasting vision of him at that moment in his own home in Poland.

A week later, when I paid my last visit before going up to college for my final examinations, I was shocked to find him in bed, suffering from an injured back. Some boys had thrown stones at him as he was crying his trade, and he had slipped on the icy pavement. One of the staples of the crate he carried had dug itself between his shoulder-blades, and he had to be borne home on a stretcher. I was heartbroken to see him, and I cried aloud in anger at the wretched boys.

"No, no, my friend," he said, smiling through his pain, "do not be angry with them; they did not know what they were doing. This is not the first time such an accident has happened to me. I shall be better soon. Ah, dear friend, I am truly glad to see you."

He did not get better soon. I engaged a nurse to wait on him, and saw that he had the best medical aid; but it was all of no avail. He suffered greatly for ten days, and then one night, when I was sitting on the bed by his side, he opened his eyes and looked at me with his old beautiful smile.

"This is the end, dear friend," he whispered, laying a thin, wasted hand on mine. "You will not forget me?"

I bent over and kissed him on his trembling lips, when, still smiling, he gave a faint sigh, and I knew that my friend had at last found rest.

The bells have long since ceased chiming the New Year's advent, and soon the world will awake to resume the march of life. We shall work and love and hope as we did in the past year, and perhaps, with stouter hearts, because of the high cause to which our spirits have been consecrated in the year just gone. Yet is our new enterprise of the same nature as were all the noble enthusiasms of the past, which have heartened us to climb to the Pisgah height from which we now view the promised land of democracy. Of great adventures in such causes history tells a splendid tale; but there were many of that noble company whose names were writ in water who deserve a tablet to their

memory. Among such I count this street-crier. I know not if glaziers still walk the street crying, "Any vinders to mend?" but I do know that should I hear that cry again, my dear friend would come back to me, and I should "ope a casement wide to let the warm love in"; for in my house of life, at least, he had mended all its windows with the love of the Master.

REB YANKEL

REB YANKEL

IN the district of London known as Whitechapel, and near to that highway of the Ghetto which goes by the name of Houndsditch, there is a bye-street dear to memory as Petticoat Lane. Half a century ago it was the Ghetto's market. On Sunday mornings it was a place for fairs, with the noise of a veritable pandemonium of business. It was anything but a clean place, but as many decent, law-abiding, God-fearing citizens abided in its purlieus then as do now, since it has been cleaned by the Health Board of London. Flanked on each side by ricketty, brick houses and insignificant little shops, the sidewalks were taken up by stalls and barrows loaded with fruits, meats, old clothes, cheap haberdashery, tin pots and pans, and the numberless other articles necessary for human consumption in an enlightened metropolitan community. On wet days its cobblestones and pavements were slushy, slippery and greasy, and on all days the street exuded the sweat of dirt. From many of the shops came the pungent odors of fried fish, fried liver, boiling sausages and sauerkraut, pickled cucumbers in large glass dishes, salted herrings in wooden barrels, and caraway-seeded bread. Men, women and children, clad in bizarre costumes in which the Oriental taste still asserted itself, passed and repassed in continuous streams. Occasionally the long flowing robes of a visitor

from Jerusalem could be seen as the *Jerushalmin* strode in dignity with fez-covered head in the middle of the roadway. Here, a solemn Israelite with hands crossed in the sleeves of an ample *kaftan* and a *yarmelke* or skull-cap on his head, and the two long locks on each side of his face stepped, solemnly, bent as if brooding on other than mere earthly things. There, an ample dame in a rich cashmere shawl and black-haired wig elbowed her way with feminine insistence and the self-assertion born of worldly riches. At night the place flared with the lights from gas jets, candles and torch-like kerosene lamps hanging from window sashes and barrows, all contributing their quota of odors to the palpitating air. For a few, bleak black hours only was there anything like silence, and even then belated home-goers would hear the snorings of the weary strugglers for life through the upper windows of the houses and shops.

Petticoat Lane bent its way round and spread itself out as a meagre square which received the streams of life from three other bye-ways. Running eastward, out of this square, was a short, squat, flagged *cul de sac* ending in a soot-blackened brick wall, known as New Street. A retired parallelogram of earth-space, New Street was the playground for some dozens of olive-skinned, brown-eyed tatterdemalions in scanty clothing and in bare feet mostly. The inmates of the houses were shopkeepers, superior peddlers and professional gentlemen, all of the Jewish faith. The professional gentlemen taught there and directed the

steps of the Children of Israel who lived there and elsewhere. One *Mohel,* two *Chazonim,* and one *Rabbi,* occupied between them three of the twenty stunted residences. At night their homes alone showed, until a late hour, glowing blind-drawn windows, inviting a learned friend, or telling of the passionate purpose of a student of the Talmud whose sing-song chanting sounded mournfully into the street.

Yet was New Street a haven of rest. On summer evenings, its roof of leaden sky changed oft-times into a bluish canopy tinged with crimson and gold and spangled, here and there, with faint twinkling stars. On Sabbaths and Festival days it was lined with cheerful, gaily dressed women seated on chairs, when the weather was fine, or chatting in hallways when it was inclement. Singing and chanting and laughter could be heard from every window and doorway. Children played or quarreled. Children are always in plenty in a Ghetto. Now and then a male figure would rush out of a doorway in response to a shrieking request from a broad, full-bosomed woman, and run to grab a grubby imp in tattered knickers out of the clutches of a grubbier imp. Sometimes a tiny damsel would fly to her mother, her face grimy with knuckle-dried tears, to complain stridently of some insult or ill-treatment. Here a small group played at marbles or cherry stones in the gutter; there another group at hop-scotch or leap frog. On such evenings New Street was the children's paradise.

"Michele! Michele!" The call came from a

small, frail old woman in a blue cotton print gown and bandanna-covered head, standing in the doorway of one of the houses. She was beckoning excitedly with brown, shriveled hand to a curly-headed five year old lad, who on hearing his name had looked up at her with his big, brown serious eyes. He was in the act of shooting a marble. *"Michele! Dein Zaida darft dir!"* The boy bent his head again and shot his marble. The little woman rushed forward and seizing him by the hand attempted to drag him away from his playmates. The boy resisted and held himself back sulkily.

"Why don't you come when I call you?" she asked angrily in Yiddish. "Didn't I tell you your grandfather wants you?" And the little woman's lips tightened while the nostrils of her aquiline nose trembled and dilated.

"I'm playing, grandmother," the lad replied stubbornly. "Let me play a little longer, and I'll come afterwards."

"No, you must come now. Come!" And she began to drag him along with her. The boy started to cry; but the old lady took no notice of his tears. "Be a good boy," she pleaded a little softeningly. "You haven't learned your piece from the *Gemara* to-day, and grandfather is waiting for you."

"I don't like to learn pieces from the *Gemara,"* the lad wailed softly, "I'd rather play at marbles."

"Nu! Nu! Nu! Sei a gutes kind und die Malochim willen dir etvos schenken!"

"What will the angels give me if I learn my piece?" asked the boy brightening.

"You'll see!"

The two entered the dark hallway and turned to the left into a room on the ground floor the window of which faced the street. By the window was a table, covered with a white damask cloth, at which sat an old white-bearded man with a large brown-leaved folio spread open before him. Rabbi Jacob Spero, or Reb Yankel, as he was affectionately called and known throughout the Ghetto, turned expectantly as the boy showed himself in the room, and holding out his arms, cried: *"Ach! mein Michele!"* The voice in which the words were uttered trembled with affectionate emotion. The boy was drawn against himself. He ran toward his grandfather and climbing on to the broad knees threw his arms round the old man's neck. The two embraced each other silently the elder kissing the younger's cheeks, lips, and eyes, murmuring the while endearing phrases of comfort and love in Yiddish, in Hebrew and in broken English.

"Let's bring the table into the middle of the room," said the little woman, "Michele can sit more comfortably then," and she looked meaningly at her husband.

Reb Yankel smiled and nodded at her over the boy's reclining head. Aloud he said: "Yes, Freyda, put the table in the middle of the room." Rising, he lifted the boy tenderly, placed him on his feet, and moved the table so that the rusty iron gas chandelier suspended from the ceiling

was directly over it. The window affording but a poor light by which to read in the dim interior, Reb Yankel lit the gas and covered the jet with a green shade. Placing a high-seated child's chair by the table he lifted the boy into it and moved the open book towards him. Then, smoothing out the pages he patted the boy's head.

"To-day, Michele, we will read a little in the treatise, *Berachoth.* Begin!" He turned to the fireplace in which burned a meagre coal fire, and leaning his back against the mantelpiece, pushed his gold-rimmed spectacles on to his high and massive brow, and placed his hands beneath the tails of his worn and shining frock-coat. A magnificent leonine head on broad shoulders stood out in relief against the shadowed wall—a head Rembrandt would have gone miles to paint. With its dark olive skin, its long flowing silky white beard, its mobile lips and eager coal-black eyes, it was as the head of some good, wise man from the East. Yarmelke-covered it almost touched the smoke-browned ceiling, so tall was he. He wanted but the robes of office, and the place, to be the high priest of some ancient oracle. He preferred, surely, to be Eli waiting on the little God-given Samuel before him.

The boy's head was bent in the yellow light over the leaves of the folio, his little forefinger moving slowly along the lines of the black squares of the Hebrew characters, as he chanted the words aloud and gave their meaning in Yiddish. The little sharp-featured and now smiling grandmother was standing in the doorway as if tasting

the fine *bouquet* of the beautiful scene. Her eyes were shining with delighted appreciation. She was thinking what a great and learned man their Michele would be one day—a famous Rabbi—a *Gaon!* Raising her head to her husband she saw him nodding at her with a meaningful look in his eyes, and nodding in response, she turned, and closed the door behind her, leaving master and pupil to themselves and their holy task.

For several minutes the boy's fluent chant filled the room. Reb Yankel, his eyes now closed, stood leaning against the mantelpiece, rocking his body in time to the music of the lad's voice, while from his mouth came an accompanying low obligato of the words of the treatise as he followed his pupil's reading from memory. He knew the *Gemara* by rote. He had studied it and dissected its text and commentaries all his life long. There was not a word that held not for him some lovely charm, or was not fraught with some secret meaning. He was one of the few Talmudic scholars to whom even very learned men came for a settlement on some nice point of textual criticism. Had he not taught the Talmud even to Dr. Nathan Adler, the chief Rabbi, himself!

The boy's chanting ceased. His finger stopped at a word. It was evident he was at a loss for its meaning. Reb Yankel opened his eyes and smiled. The boy kept on looking at the word, repeating it murmuringly to himself as if trying to sense out what it meant. Finally, he gave it up and, lifting his finger from the page, he raised his head showing a tired face and appealing eyes.

"I am so tired, grandfather; can't I play now?"

"Just a little piece more, my dear child, just a little more. Now, where's the word? Ah, that's right; that's right!" The boy had repeated the translation the old man had supplied him with. Reb Yankel had come forward and was bending over the volume, his hand resting lovingly on the boy's shoulder and his white head touching caressingly the curly brown one. He chanted a sentence gently, the boy responding, with courage born of affection, in cheery unison. Suddenly the young voice paused. Something had dropped with a loud flop right on to the page of the opened folio, and lay there within a few inches of the boy's nose. The lad was astounded.

"Look! Look! Grandfather!" he cried, pointing excitedly to a bright, glittering, new half-crown.

"That is for thee, Michele; take it. The angels have sent it to thee for learning the *Gemara.*"

"For me, grandfather!" exclaimed the child incredulously.

Reb Yankel nodded, smiling. The boy seized the coin and held it tightly in his little fist. He looked at it several times as if doubting his senses. His face became now transfigured with an expression of awed enthusiasm. In suppressed excitement he whispered to the old man:

"Are the angels listening, grandfather?"

"Surely, my child, surely! The angels are always listening to what we do and say. They write down in a book what we have done, and what we think even, and show it to God. That is how God judges us."

"Shall I learn some more?" asked the lad softly.

The chanting began afresh and had continued for barely three minutes before another coin fell on the book, and another new half-crown went into the little fist to companion the one already there. The boy's excitement grew. Eagerly he chanted in response to the old man's lead. The words meant nothing to him; but his remarkable memory stored them like a sponge does water. Again and again, and yet again the coins continued to drop until six had fallen, and the child's hand could hardly hold them all.

"Now we have finished for to-day. You have done well," and the old man, moving the volume aside, kissed the lad full on his lips.

"It is time for *Maariv,* Michele. Let us wash our hands."

Reb Yankel passed through a doorway at the far end of the room, and came back with a basin of water and a towel. The two laved their hands perfunctorily and dried them. The old man then went back to the kitchen taking basin and towel with him.

Day had, by this time, faded into a dusky twilight glowing with the sun's golden setting somewhere far away from this walled-in corner of the Ghetto. Through the muslin-curtained window no sky was visible, only a shade-saturated ruddy glow. The noises in the street had ceased. The lights from candles and lamps threw shadows on the blind-drawn windows of the neighboring houses, their glow accenuating the oncoming of night. The lamplighter had just lit the street lamp, which

sent its light into the living-room of Reb Yankel's house. The bell of the muffin man was heard in the distance as he made his regular evening round. The end of the day was come.

Reb Yankel returned from the kitchen and, lifting the boy from his high chair where he sat clutching his heaven-sent treasure of coins, set him down by the window. The two stood together, side by side, with faces turned upward and eastward, silent for several moments, in the grey darkness. Then was heard the low chant of the evening prayer. The boy knew it by rote and piped in soprano unison to the deep bass of Reb Yankel's sonorous tones. Thus they stood and prayed—the towering white-bearded velvet-capped man and the tiny curly-headed lad at his side—high priest and acolyte in the service of the living God.

They thus stood and prayed, their bodies rocking and swaying now in quick and now in slow time, for some five or six minutes. Then both simultaneously took two short paces backward, raised themselves on the balls of their feet, came down on their heels, took two short paces forward, again raised themselves and again came down on their heels. Then a profound bow to the east, and the evening prayer was over.

On turning to the light they saw the door silently open and the tiny, beady-eyed grandmother enter, her face aglow with excitement—her lips wreathed in a smile of triumph.

"*Nu,* have you learnt your piece from the *Gemara,*" she asked the boy.

"Oh, grandmother, look what the angels sent me!" The lad's face was a vision of beatific delight, as he held out his hands with the half-crowns glittering in the palms.

"*Nu,* Michele, what did I tell you? Did I not say to you the angels would give you something? Now, you see!"

"Yes, yes, you did say it. I'm going to buy a big gun like Mendel der Soldat has, and I'll have such a grand time with the boys. We'll play at soldiers!"

"Ah, but you must not tell the boys how you got the money. They won't understand if you say the angels sent it to you, they don't learn the *Gemara* like you do."

Reb Yankel had been looking on smiling. "We will go together to Cheapside, on the top of the big omnibus. And we'll look in at the windows of the fine big shops, and I'll lift you on my shoulder and you'll see the wonderful clock with the two big iron men striking twelve."

"Oh, grandfather, I do want to see that clock. It must be a wonderful clock!"

"Well, we will go to-morrow morning. And now, Freyda, let us have our supper. We have already said *Maariv.*"

The frugal meal, soon prepared and partaken of, was followed by the prayer of thanksgiving, after which the boy was permitted to play with his half-crowns on the hearthrug before the fire while the grandmother busied herself in the kitchen with the dishes, and Reb Yankel sat down to write a letter. Her duties finished, the little woman re-

turned and took her place on a stool near the fireplace with her knitting. For a time nothing was heard but the clicking of the knitting needles, the clinking of the coins and the scratching of the quill pen. Then the clinking and the clicking ceased. The little woman rose silently and tiptoed over to her husband.

"Er schloft," she whispered to him, pointing to the boy who had fallen asleep on the rug with the coins tightly clenched in his little fists.

Reb Yankel laid his pen in the long neck of the ink-bottle, rose, and stooping over the sleeping form, gently extracted the coins from the lad's hands and handed them to his wife Then tenderly lifting the boy he held him in his arms as he waited for his wife to light a candle.

Up a flight of creaking stairs which led from the outer dark hall the two trod softly until they reached the back-room—the only bedroom in the house other than their own. Here the boy was undressed and then gently laid and carefully covered in a small wooden bed. The angel-sent coins were embedded in a pillow by the side of the sleeping lad. The grandmother stood on one side holding aloft the lighted candle which shed a misty glow over the pillowed head with its mass of short brown curls falling away from a broad square forehead. On the other side the tall black figure of the grandfather, his white-bearded head raised upward and his eyes closed in the act of a prayer. His lips were silently shaping the words which called on the God of Israel to keep watch and ward over his beloved who was to be dedicated

to the service of Jehovah. "He that dwelleth in the shelter of the Most High abideth under the shadow of the Almighty."

"Now, my dear, go and rest in thy bed." The old couple were in the living-room again. "I must finish my letter to Reb Jerusha Jerushalmin."

A pained expression came into the wife's eyes and over her yellow, wizened face. She shivered at the word *Jerushalmin,* and was about to make an angry reply when Reb Yankel took her head between his hands and, stooping, kissed her on the forehead:

"Nu, Nu, Nu," he murmured soothingly. *"Sei a gutes kind.* Go to bed, my dear one, and do not forget to put the carpet over the hole in the floor of our bedroom, so that Michele shall not see the opening in the ceiling there."

II

REB YANKEL sat in his armchair by the window of his living-room, reading. The hour was late—long past midnight—and the oil in the glass reservoir of the lamp showed three parts consumed. The light from the shaded lamp shone full on the pages of the folio, leaving the rest of the room deep in shadows. On the wall behind him hung an old engraving, in a yellow bird's-eye maple frame, of a view of the *Kocil Maarovi,* or western wall of the Temple of Jerusalem, the last remains of that city's ancient glory. The picture showed

a number of *talith*-covered worshippers praying before the ruin. A coal-fire flamed brightly in the grate, for the early October night was sharp and frosty, and a smoke-blackened tin coffee-pot stood on the hob.

Reb Yankel's reading suddenly ceased; he leaned forward in a listening attitude. Shuffling steps echoed in the court without and became more distinct as they approached the house. The sound ceased, and then three sharp taps on the window pane broke the stillness. Immediately Reb Yankel raised his hand, so that the light from the lamp threw its shadow on the muslin curtain, and bending the thumb against the palm held the four fingers straight up close together. A minute later the door of the room opened and there entered a tall, black-bearded man wearing a red fez on his head. He stood there for a moment, with flowing dark green robe depending from his shoulders and almost covering his thick-soled sandals. Reb Yankel rose hurriedly and extending his right hand, said:

"*Sholem Alaichem,* Reb Jerusha."

"*Alaichem Sholem,* Reb Yankel," came back in deep sonorous tones as the two clasped hands in a tight grip.

"It is a cold night. Sit down by the fire, Reb Jerusha." Reb Yankel spoke, not in Yiddish but in Hebrew. The visitor took a chair and began warming and rubbing his hands near the flames.

"Thou didst receive my letter, then?" asked Reb Yankel.

The visitor nodded, and a light shone from his eyes through the deep shadow in which he sat. The

flames from the fire were reflected from his eyeballs and burnished the copper-colored skin of his face giving the head a demon-like appearance.

"Nu?" asked Red Yankel.

"Thy wife, sleepeth she?"

Reb Yankel nodded. The visitor spoke more freely.

"Thy friends are awaiting thee in Jerusalem. I told them of thy desire to come and live with us, and they rejoiced exceeding at the news. We are not wealthy, and the Turk oppresseth us, taxing us heavily, but what we have we will gladly share with thee. The land hath sore need of such as thou, Reb Yankel."

"Nay, I will not be a charge on thee and thy brethren. Are there many young people—young men and women, I mean—abiding there?"

"Some ten or twelve score, all laboring industriously."

"That is well. Are they content to abide there?"

"That is my fear. The hard conditions under which they live are making them restive. They left comfortable homes, attracted by the glamour of *Eretz Yisrael.* They have been disappointed by the reality. It is not easy, therefore, to keep the flame of enthusiasm burning in their breasts. We need a leader, Reb Yankel, one who will inspire us with living words of hope and encourage us by his example."

"I am too old for that service, Reb Jerusha; but I may find you such a leader. Are there schools there in which I may teach?" The old man asked the question eagerly.

"There is a good *Beth Hamidresh;* but the scholars are few, for the country is not peopled with many of our faith. Of late years, however, some dozen families have come from Russia to settle there, but they find it hard to subsist. The land is barren for lack of water and the means to cultivate it. Three of the families have returned to Russia."

"And yet it was once a land flowing with milk and honey!" exclaimed Reb Yankel in tearful tones. "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!" he quoted. "She that was great among the nations and priceless among the provinces, how is she become tributary!" The old man's voice took on the wail of a dirge-like chant, and died away with the last word.

"She sleepeth sore in the night," responded the Jerushalmin, sobbing in the same tone, "and her tears are on her cheeks! Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her! All her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies."

"Nay, not so, Reb Jerusha. She has us. We will bring back her ancient glory. We will rebuild the Temple, and Zion's hills shall once again resound with the music of the psaltery and tabor and the singing of psalms. Hear, thou! I have a grandson, a rare lad. A brain! And a soul, ah,—sugar-sweet! I am teaching him and instructing him in the ways of righteousness. I will make a home for him in Jerusalem. I will send for him and he shall follow me and carry on our holy work. He shall marry thy daughter, Rebecca, Reb

Jerusha, and they will bear many children for Zion's sake."

The old man's face radiated in the enthusiasm aroused in him by his own words. He raised his arms upward, the palms outspread! "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God the Lord is One." With the utterance of the last word Reb Yankel's eyes shut tightly and his fists clenched.

"I am content, Reb Yankel, but we are poor—very poor."

"I have enough to last for awhile. I have been saving for many years for this blessed time. My wife shall follow me, later, when our home is ready. She will bring my Michele with her. And I can earn a little—enough, perhaps, for our simple wants—by teaching. I have taught many already."

"When dost thou meditate to depart? I ask, because in twenty days from now I return with the five Jerushalmin whom our brethren sent here to collect money for the support of the *Shool* and the *Beth Hamidresh.* And it would rejoice us to have thy company on our journey."

"I know of whom thou speakest. I have met them. It may be that I will accompany thee and them."

"What is there to withhold thee?"

"A family matter. My youngest daughter is causing me great distress of heart. She desires to marry a man who is a shame to our religion and our race."

"I mourn with thee, Reb Yankel." The Jerushalmin spoke with evident deep feeling. "I have known that sorrow also."

"He goeth not in the ways of our people, and doth not keep holy the Sabbath day. He is unclean and runneth after strange women. That I should live to see this thing! The child will bring my grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. And I have loved her so dearly." The old man bent his head on his hand to hide the tears that forced themselves from his eyelids.

"Hast thou tried her with another?" asked Rabbi Jerusha.

"I have. A handsome, fine young man; of good family and good means, who is most willing to make her his wife. But she will not even speak with him. The other has bewitched her. I cannot understand it, and he is not worthy to tie the shoe lace of the one I have brought her. I shall try again to persuade her. If she listen to me, I must wait until the wedding is over. If her heart be still hardened against me and she persists, I will go to Jerusalem with thee and thy friends. Here is my hand upon it."

The two hands closed together in a tight clasp.

"I shall expect thee then, for I doubt she will be moved. Thou knowest the ways of women when once they have set their hearts on a man."

Reb Yankel smiled plaintively at his friend's words.

"The Lord our God will be good to me," he said; "my life is in His hands."

The Jerushalmin bowed his head. Raising it he stretched out his hand. "I must go," he said; "the hour is late, and I have far to travel. Peace be with thee."

"And with thee be peace," was the reply.

Reb Yankel accompanied Reb Jerusha to the door and bolted it after him. The shuffling steps died away in the distance as the old man reentered the room and sat down again before his book. He looked very worn and tired. Resting his forehead on both hands he stared blankly at the open page. The lamp's wick began to sputter and crackle; the oil in the reservoir had given out, leaving the room in darkness except for the flickering light from the fire-grate. Utter silence held the room in a black embrace. Reb Yankel continued to sit, bowed over his book, the outline of his form barely distinguishable in the fiful glimmers. He sat thus for a seeming long time; then the sound of feet walking came from the room overhead; a scraping of chairs and the creak of a door opening, and then the patter of slippers. Reb Yankel still sat bowed over his book.

A coal dropped into the red bed of the fire and a bright, fresh flame flared. The light revealed a little pale-faced woman in the doorway. She had thrown a wrapper hastily over her form, and a small shawl was tied over her head beneath her chin. The pupils of her eyes were dilated from fear and the muscles of her face quivered. The flame went out again and darkness filled the room.

"Yankel! Yankel! Art thou here?" The words came in tense whispers. The old man still sat bowed over his book.

"Yankele! Yankele!" The voice rose to a cry. Reb Yankel looked up startled. He rose hurriedly and

going to the door caught the little woman by the hand.

"What are you doing here, Freyda?" he cried. "Why are you not in bed?"

"*Ai,* Yankel, I was awakened by some one walking in the street and found you were not with me. I waited some time, then I became frightened, and so I came to see what was keeping you."

"Oh, my dear, you are shivering. Come inside and sit by the fire. It is a very cold night Wait, I will light the candles." He led her to a seat by the fireplace and stirred the coals into a bright flame. Then striking a match from a box on the mantelpiece he lit three candles in an old silver seven-branched candelabra on a table opposite the window. Their flames sent a cheering comfort through the room. The old man drew a chair near the fire and sat with one arm round the little woman's shoulder.

"Why do you sit up, Yankel? I am always speaking to you about it, and you never heed my words."

"I cannot sleep of late, Freyda. My heart is heavy about our daughter. She knows not the evil she is storing up for herself in the future."

"What good will your worry do? She will go her own way, now that she is no longer dependent on us. Forgive her, and do not harden thy heart against her. Where a woman's heart is there is her life."

"I know it; I know it. And yet I must speak. For I see a vision before me of evil coming to her. She will know years of sorrow and suffering with the

man she has chosen. He is evil in his heart and evil in his life."

"Thou art not thyself, Yankel, to-night. Who was it that passed along the street just now? Did one come to see you?"

"Yes, Reb Jerusha."

"The Jerushalmin!" The word left her lips in a scream. "I felt it! I felt it! *Ai!* How I hate him! A cholera on him! He is taking you from me! You will leave me and our Michele; and I'll never see you again. We shall lie buried, our graves seas apart."

The little woman began to rock herself to and fro, beating her breast with her clenched hand. Tears were streaming from her eyes and her breath came and went in hysterical sobs.

"My dear one, my dear one!" the old man murmured brokenly, caressing her head with his hand, "Do not distress thyself needlessly. The Lord our God and the God of our fathers will not forget us. He is our shepherd and will bring us to lie down in green pastures, and lead us beside still waters."

"Oh, I know, I know God is good. But leave me not alone, Yankele, leave me not alone; I can trust in the Almighty better when you are with me."

"It will be but for a short time. I cannot stay and witness this shame our daughter is bringing on my head. Moreover, I hear a voice calling me, by night and by day. Zion needs me. The people there await me. I go first, but you will follow. I shall but prepare a place for you—you and Michele.

Then shall you two come out to me together, and we shall live the rest of our days in joyfulness. And our grandson shall grow up in the fear of the Lord, a learned rabbi and a leader in Israel."

"Why can you not do this in England?" She looked up at her husband with piteous pleading in her tear-filled eyes.

"England! What can a poor man like me do in England? Here I am as one crying in the wilderness. Here, it is money, money, money! In this land nothing can be done without money; and I have no money. How will our Michele grow up in the midst of these Philistines, in this land where the word of the *Torah* counts as a pea in comparison with the gold sovereign? See how the other children of Israel are growing up. What are they? Swindlers and ignorant boors! Even the rabbis are hypocrites and speak false things for money. Learning and piety are of no value here. The people have given themselves up to seeking after vain things. They bow down before the Golden Calf, and have forgotten the God of their fathers."

"Can you better it by going away to *Eretz Yisrael?* There is no land of Israel now. It is become a wilderness. Here we have been happy together and brought our children up in decency. We still have them and our friends also."

"Children! Friends! Some children do not care if they bring us to shame. And our friends, where are they? Will they feed us when we are hungry? Yes, if we are willing to beg charity of them. Will they give us a place to rest our heads, if we are in want? Yes, if we bow down before them. But I

will not beg from any man, nor will I bend the knee to him. When I beg and bow down it is to God alone."

"You have never wanted bread and a roof since we lived here, and we have never begged. Why should you fear now?"

"We are no longer young, Freyda. There is no room in this country for old people. The younger generation is pushing us to the wall. Even our own children set us at naught. A people whose children no longer honor their fathers and their mothers is a people destined to destruction. And I fear for our own people. The time is come, Freyda, for some one to make a move Zionward. Why should not I be that one? If Zion be not re-established then will the religion of the Jews die out in the world. Palestine and Judaism are the strands of one golden rope binding us to the living God. Without our faith, the land is a wilderness; with our faith, it will once more be a land flowing with milk and honey. Without Palestine, the children of Israel are wanderers over the face of the earth; mocked at and despised wherever they go; hated and persecuted as a landless people and as having no part in the affairs of the world. With Palestine the Jew will regain the dignity of his nationality; he will take his rightful place among the nations; he will be the soldier in the army of the Lord of Hosts, the standard bearer of Truth and Faith. This is what he was, and that he will become again. We are a peculiar people; chosen by God from among all nations of the earth to declare Him and to establish His cove-

nant. We must become a nation again in order that the word of the living God shall be acknowledged and righteousness reign on earth."

Reb Yankel's eyes were glowing and beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead. He was breathing heavily from his self-aroused enthusiasm.

"Ach, Yankele, Yankele," gently answered his wife, "you are a beautiful dreamer, and you have a beautiful soul. God will reward you in His own good time. But, meanwhile, what is to become of me and the child? How are we to live if you go away to Jerusalem?"

"I have seen to that. I shall leave enough money to keep you comfortably until I send for you. It will take but a few months, and I shall have everything ready. Reb Jerusha tells me I shall be able to teach there, and there is money coming in to keep up the *Beth Hamidresh.* So we shall not want. We shall have a little garden to grow things in; and you can keep some hens and a cow, just like it was in Russia. You remember, Freyda, eh?"

The frail old woman sighed, laid her head against her husband's breast and held his hands, caressing them with her own worn and calloused housewife's palms.

"It will be pleasant, very pleasant, Yankele," she murmured drowsily. "Men were born for labor and women for suffering. Let it be then as thou sayest, and God's will be done."

The silver dawn of the October morning spread itself slowly through the shadows of the room. It

dissolved the darkness within as by a magical chemistry, and precipitated the figures of Reb Yankel and his wife asleep, sitting in their chairs. One arm of the old man was round his wife's shoulders, and the hand of the other lay clasped in both of hers as she sat with her head on his breast. The candles had long since burnt out; the fire had died down to a few ash-coated embers. Stronger and stronger grew the daylight until a red shaft from the sun itself, reflected from some window without, shot into the room and burnished the picture of the Temple ruins hanging on the wall, from which it was again reflected full on to the smiling face of Reb Yankel dreaming of a golden-gated Jerusalem.

"Grandfather! Grandmother!" The door flew open and Michael in a white night-shirt, rushed bare-foot into the room. He stopped suddenly, and gazed in open-eyed wonder at the two sleeping figures before the fire-grate. Then he became frightened. The scene was bewildering in its strangeness. "Grandfather! Grandmother!" he cried again in a shrill, piercing voice. The two awoke with a start. Reb Yankel was the first to realize the situation. He rose quickly, shook himself, rubbed his eyes, and then with a rich, happy laugh, ran forward and caught the boy in his arms.

"What are you doing up so early, you little rascal, eh?" he asked chuckling.

"But, Michele!" cried the old woman, "how did you get out of your room? I locked you in last night."

The boy smiled at her over his grandfather's shoulder.

"I knocked so hard at the door to make you hear me, and you didn't come. And I shouted out loud and nobody heard me. I was frightened to be locked in; so I opened the window and jumped down into the backyard."

"May the dear God help us! And didn't you break your legs?" The grandmother began feeling his limbs with eager searching hands. "Yankel, put him down and see if he is able to walk."

"I'm all right, grandmother, only my knee hurts a little, that's all."

"Did you ever hear of such a thing?"

"Ah, my child," said the old man cuddling the lad against his breast, "it is a miracle thou wast not killed. It is a sign that thou wilt live to be a great man. But do not do it again, it is a very dangerous thing to do. Come, let us wash ourselves and say our prayers, while thy grandmother gets the breakfast ready."

III

IT was the night of full moon in the month of Heshvan, the night preceding the morning on which Reb Yankel was to take ship for Jerusalem. The living-room in the house in New Street was lit up with the lights from the wax candles in the silver candelabra. In the room were seated Reb Yankel, his wife with the boy, Michael, in her lap, and six swarthy faced, dark-bearded Orientals in flowing robes of various colors, some of whom wore

the red fez alone and others a small white turban encircling the fez. The remains of a meal, hastily gathered together and placed aside, lay on a table by the wall nearest the entrance door. A fire blazed brightly in the grate and threw its orange-red glow over the empty space of wooden flooring in the centre of the room. On the table near the window stood a highly polished brass samovar, and a number of glass tumblers partly filled with tea and slices of lemon. Two of the Jerushalmin held tumblers filled with the beverage in their hands, and were sipping it through a piece of loaf-sugar in the mouth, cooling the liquid with their blowing breaths before each sip.

A general conversation was in progress; voices crossed in every direction, now loud, now low; now in earnest tones, now in waves of laughter. Faces flushed and eyes glowed in the candle-light. In one corner two were in the midst of an excited discussion, emphasizing their arguments with vehement gesticulations and jerkings of beards. The grandmother sat silent on a low three-legged stool in the far corner of the fireside, her grandson, whom she embraced tightly, on her knees. Her face showed corpse-like and drawn in the dusky yellow light; her lips were shut close, creasing in numerous tiny wrinkles the skin about her mouth. She kept glancing anxiously like a frightened sparrow, from one to the other of the strangely clad men, and from them to her husband who sat in his accustomed seat by the window in earnest converse with Rabbi Jerusha. His overcoat was thrown over the back of his chair, and his tall silk hat lay on the

table before him. The child on the old woman's knees was trying hard to keep his eyes from closing. Occasionally his head would fall forward with the weight of sleep, and then his grandmother would lift him in a more comfortable upright position and murmur to him, "Not yet, Michele; just a little while longer."

An ancient, yellow-faced, circular shaped clock, with chain and weights, whirred hoarsely and began striking the hour on a cracked bell. It struck ten times. As the last stroke died away the conversation ceased, and a silence filled the room. Reb Yankel rose and crossed over to where his wife was sitting. He bent toward her and, stroking affectionately her white kerchiefed head, he said in a low voice: "Give me the child, Freyda."

The old woman lifted the boy and handed him to her husband. Reb Yankel fixed him comfortably in the crook of his left arm and stepped into the middle of the room. Immediately the six long-robed, fez-capped Orientals rose and formed a wide circle about him.

A strange, weird picture they made—the tall old man in black with his white beard flowing down his breast; the little white, night-gowned child held aloft in his arms; the six dark-skinned, black-bearded Jerushalmin, in their long robes, the bent witch-like figure of the old woman on her stool by the fireside; and all in the chiaroscuro of the candle-light, their shadows on the walls and ceiling, blotting out what light had lately been reflected from them. In the silence and semi-darkness the scene might have been taken for some

ritual of Orphic mystery among the Eleusinian rocks.

Suddenly, as though with one voice, came from all the words in Hebrew:

> *"Hear, O Israel: the Lord Our God, The Lord is One!*

So loud was the sound that it filled the room and sent the candle flames flickering spasmodically. The lad had lifted up his voice with the rest.

> *"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."*

Again the room echoed and reëchoed, and again could be heard the piping notes of the child repeating the words of the prayer. Then followed a low murmur of praying from all, and then a silence. The silence was broken by the boy's singing. He was chanting the ninety-first psalm:

> *"He that dwelleth in the shelter of the Most High, abideth under the shadow of the Almighty. I say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust. For He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His pinions, and under his wings shalt thou take refuge; His truth shall be a shield and a buckler. . . ."*

The child's voice had barely ceased when the full-toned chorus from the seven elders took up the third psalm in slow, solemn time. Its conclusion found

the boy fast asleep, his head fallen on his grandfather's shoulders.

> *"Stand in awe and sin not: Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah!"*

Three times were these words repeated, and each time with deeper feeling, and in more reverent tones.

In the silence which followed, the six visitors stood waiting, their hands clasped before them and their eyes fixed on Reb Yankel. The old man stood for a moment as if hesitating, then with determination, he took a step to one side and an opening was made for him in the circle. He went up to his wife and laid the sleeping lad tenderly in her lap. Standing by her side, he placed his hand upon her head and blessed her with silent moving lips. The old woman had bent her face over the sleeping child and was weeping quiet, heart-breaking tears. The Jerushalmin gathered in a semi-circle round the husband and wife and began chanting softly the prayer for those who are about to set out on a journey—praying to be directed in peace and to be delivered from enemy, ambush and hurt. It was opened in the subdued tones of hope; but it ended in glad notes of assurance.

> *"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. . . . The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."*

These last words concluded the solemn service. The six robed figures moved silently apart and gathered together near the doorway, their faces turned with sympathetic looks to the group at the fireside. The candles had burnt low, and were flickering fitfully in their sockets. The figures in the doorway seemed like ghoulish apparitions waiting for their victim. The little grandmother shivered. Reb Jerusha stepped forward and handed Reb Yankel his hat and overcoat. The old man took them from him the tears streaming from his eyes. He motioned to his friend to go, and made him understand by a gesture that he would follow later. Reb Jerusha moved to the old woman, placed his hand on her head and breathed a prayer. Then he hurriedly crossed the room and passed out through the doorway. One by one each of the others came forward and repeated Jerusha's action and blessing until all had passed out into the night. The sound of departing steps broke the stillness of the midnight air, echoed for a few moments in the court without, then all was again still.

The bell from the clock of Houndsditch Church boomed out the first hour of the new day as a bent figure in a tall hat left Reb Yankel's house and staggered down the moonlit street.

IV

It was the evening of the Sabbath in late March when the east wind blows bitingly in London and brings with it occasional flurries of soot-stained snow-flakes, an evening when street passengers take care to wrap themselves in heavy garments and home-stayers sit close to the fireside. In the house in New Street the grate was well filled with blazing coals which sent a comforting glow over the living-room. Everything in it was clean and orderly, as was proper for the Sabbath day. The candles which had been lit and blessed flamed cheerily on the mantelpiece; the meal had been eaten, the prayer of thanksgiving said, and the dishes removed into the kitchen. White damask cloths covered the two tables, and a white counterpane lay tightly drawn over a truckle-bed in a corner of the room, near the fireplace. Before the fire sat grandmother Freyda, spectacles on nose, laboriously spelling out some sentimental moral tale in Yiddish in a cumbrous quarto on her knees. At the table near the window, Michael sat reading the psalms aloud by the light of a single candle.

Five months had passed since Reb Yankel had sailed for Palestine. His daughter had married the man of her choice; and when the wedding took place Reb Yankel was nearing Alexandria. Two letters from him had been delivered at the house in New Street, in both of which he promised a speedy reunion. But the letters were fuller of Michele, and his plans for the boy's future, and of his delight at

being in the Holy Land, than of the definite information for which his wife was eager. The last letter was now nine weeks old, and the little woman had become exceedingly anxious and disquieted. The money Reb Yankel had left with her was almost entirely spent, and she had been compelled to write to him of her need. In the meantime, she safeguarded herself by renting the two bedrooms upstairs, and she and the boy slept in the living-room. The truckle-bed was her couch, and little Michael slept on two chairs placed against the wall. Michael's mother had also received word of her mother's anxiety, and had replied, saying she would be in London in a few days to look after them both until the good news should come from Jerusalem. She might arrive any day.

The postman's loud rat-tat resounded in the narrow hallway and startled the two sitting in the room.

"Quick, Michele, run and see! It may be a letter from grandfather." She closed her book excitedly and stood waiting, her hand pressed against her side. The boy returned, shouting gleefully:

"Grandmother! It *is* a letter from grandfather. I know by the stamp."

The old woman took the sealed envelope in her trembling hands and examined the writing on it by the light of the candles. The address was written in angular, foreign-looking English script. As she knew not how to read English, the writing told her nothing. But the hand-writing was different from that which she remembered seeing on the other letters which she had received.

"For who did the postman say this letter was?" she asked the boy.

"For Mrs. Freyda Spero."

"Go, quick then, and ask the Gentile woman in Petticoat Lane to be so kind and open it."

The boy took the letter and ran out of the room. As the Sabbath had been ushered in hours since, she could not, of course, tear the paper of the envelope herself.

It was ten minutes before the lad returned with the envelope opened. He handed it to his grandmother. She sat down where the boy had been sitting at his psalms, and took out the letter. Two five-pound Bank of England notes fluttered on to the tablecloth from between its folds. She took these with a smile and carefully inserted them in the bosom of her gown. To this day it is a matter for wonder among the family that the Gentile woman in Petticoat Lane, who had opened the envelope, had not kept the money. There must be good Gentiles in the world as well as good Jews.

Like most Jewish women of her time Freyda Spero had received little or no education in Hebrew. What she knew she had picked up for herself mostly, in the student's atmosphere of her house. She could read well enough the printed Hebrew characters, but the script used in writing was always a very difficult matter for her to decipher. And, indeed, this is not to be wondered at, for some scripts would tax even the expert eye of a palæographer to make out. The document, though written in the Hebrew cursive characters, was in Yiddish. She paused for a long time at the open-

ing words. She could not, try as she would, make them read, "My dearest Freyda." The words kept persistently shaping themselves as "My dear Frau Spero." However, she let that pass, and went on to the next words. The more she worked at them the more puzzled she grew. How these flourishes did bother one! Still, she kept bravely on. She turned her head first to left and then to right, as if she thought that by looking at them sideways the words might suddenly reveal themselves in familiar, understandable guise, as a whole. But no, she could make nothing out of the jumble. And yet she had not experienced this difficulty with the previous letters from Yankel. The handwriting was not his, of that she was finally convinced. A look of fear came into her eyes. Was anything the matter with him? Was he sick and unable to write? She pressed her hand to her bosom. A crinkling sound responded to the pressure. Ah, the money! She smiled. That certainly was Yankel's! He must have gone somewhere and asked some friend to write the letter. She returned to her task, but after several vain attempts she finally gave it up in despair, and laid the letter on the table. As she did so, she felt a little hand on her arm, and, looking down, saw her grandson watching her smilingly.

"Michele! Why, of course. You can read it. What an old fool I am! Here, my dear child, read it for me aloud, and read it nicely, so that I can understand every word."

Dear, simple soul! It was not long before she did, indeed, understand every word of that fateful letter, as each fell hesitatingly but clearly from the

lips of her little Michele. The letter had been written by Reb Jerusha and not by Reb Yankel. Reb Yankel would write no more loving letters to his beloved Freyda. Reb Yankel would dream no more beautiful dreams of a reconstituted and repeopled Land of Israel. Reb Yankel's great soul would see no more visions of a new and glorified Temple in Jerusalem. Reb Yankel would hope and labor no longer for little Michele and his future as a leader in Israel. Reb Yankel was dead—dead of a malarial fever, caught while praying at a late hour by the ruins of that western wall of the Temple.

The boy finished the letter as he had begun it, in a steady, even voice. To him the news meant nothing. "A little child that lightly draws its breath; what should it know of death"? The boy looked up and saw that his grandmother had fallen back, and was lying limp and seemingly asleep. The look on the old, parchment-like face frightened him. He began to cry.

"Grandmother! Grandmother! What's the matter? You look so ill!" He seized her cold, clammy hands and began shaking them. Getting no response he clambered on to her knees, put his arms round her neck, placed his warm cheek against her chilled, sunken one, and sobbed as if his little heart were bursting.

"Grandmother! Grandmother! Wake up! Why are you sleeping?" The warmth from the child's body and his salt tears on her lips, revived her from the faint which had seized her. She opened her eyes slowly and looked around. Feeling the boy's

weight on her breast, she put her arm gently round him and raised herself to a sitting position.

"Michele," she whispered, "thou art here, near me, art thou not? Do not go away. I am not well. I would lie down awhile."

The boy loosened her arms from about him and slipped down from her knees. Leaning on him heavily the old woman managed painfully to find her feet and shuffled to the bed. She laid herself down with a deep sigh of relief, still holding the lad's hand.

"Yankele, mein Yankele," she sobbed brokenly, here face buried in the pillow, "my fears have come to pass. We shall lie buried, our graves seas apart."

Presently her moaning and sobbing subsided, the frail body proving too weak for her sorrow.

"Lie next to me, Michele," she murmured, "it is good to have you here, by my side."

The boy climbed into the bed and stretched himself by the old woman's side. They lay thus together, each embracing the other, for long hours, numbered by the wheezing clock. The flames from the candles flickered out, and left the room in the dim glow of the fire-light and the faint glare of the street lamp's flame through the curtained window. Above them, on the wall, the clock's pendulum swung its tick-tick, tick-tick, relentlessly, as if royally indifferent to the throbbings of the tired heart lying there in the shadows. From the distant busy streets came the hum of the city's night life preparing for its daily breathing-spell. Noises from the shutting of doors and latching of windows broke in. Then utter silence, with only the pendulum's tick-tick,

tick-tick, now seemingly louder and more relentless.

"Art thou asleep, Michele," came a loud whisper in the dark.

"Nearly, grandmother." The boy's voice was drowsily heavy.

"Canst thou sing me something?"

"Yes, grandmother. What shall I sing for you?"

"Sing *Yigdal*. Sing it in the tune thy grandfather loved." Her voice was barely audible.

Out of the darkness, to the tune Christians have adopted for one of their hymns, came in clear piping soprano notes the words of that grand morning call: "Magnified and praised be the living God."

Long before the boy had finished his singing the old woman was sleeping a restful, heart-healing sleep. Soon the boy also slumbered. Thus they lay, side by side, while the clock's pendulum relentlessly tick-ticked the hours of night away.

When the Sabbath morning broke, soft and balmy with the first touches of a reawakened spring, little Michael's grandmother had gone to meet Reb Yankel in a New Jerusalem.

NEW YORK AT TWILIGHT

NEW YORK AT TWILIGHT

A METROPOLITAN city is a wonderful thing. It would seem as if, in creating it, we had enlisted into our service elemental forces the secrets of which were unknown to us; for out of the combination has arisen not only the visible city of our purpose, but another invisible living thing. Something unforseen, something undreamed of has come into life; something that never was before even in our minds, and yet now that it is, something that somehow is ourselves in intangible form. It is not the constructed, towering thing of bricks and mortar and steel, but a mysterious, impalpable permeating entity which the day's golden sunlight precipitates and sublimates into a kind of gladsome, personal impulsive energy; which takes a dream-like form of mystical beauty at twilight, as it comes out embodied and couchant, from the half-lights, and which reveals in reeling revelry its will-killing, heart-breaking, irresistible beauty at night.

In our self-forgetting labors we build better than we know. In making homes we make sanctuaries as well as resting-places. In building a city we precipitate the communal instinct along with the separate avenues and streets, and this communal instinct becomes a living entity in itself that somehow or other stands for each of us as well as for all of us. Of the city of stone and steel we know it as a more or less satisfying embodiment of our architectural art, and as a place in which we can eat, sleep

and be happy, at times, and at other times be alone, hungry, and agonizedly awake. This is the city we intended to build. But that other thing, the thing that sprang up unpurposed, the city of our secret selves, that which we might call the spirit of the city, of that we can only know as we live. How came it into being? What happened?

That happened which always will happen when the creative impulse in us shapes our dreams and desires and gives them forms separate from ourselves—the forms take on the divine qualities of their creators. In the poem or the painting it is his divine self that the poet or the painter embodies. A city is of a like character, and it is the real selves in us which float unseen about it and give the city its individuality.

The city, however, differs in a very important essential from other works of art. The picture once painted or the poem sung, it stands henceforth by itself; the artist can do no more for it. It must live or die without further help from him. But the city is never thus entirely separated from us, its builders. It remains tied to us by the invisible chords of our nourishing passions. It grows with us or it dies with us. It is thus in a more real and personal sense a part of us as we are of it. It becomes then the reflex of the lives and aspirations of the people who dwell in it. So that a city—its streets, its highways, its buildings, its public places, as well as its business and life—is an embodiment of ourselves. It is this living spirit that may hearten and inspire us; that may delight and enchant us; and that may also break and destroy us.

I may never forget my first impression of New York when I sailed up its bay and saw, in the distance, the raised torch in the uplifted hand of the figure rising from the waters as Liberty. I caught my breath in an exultant aspiration. The wide, blue dome of the sky, so near to me through the crystal-clear atmosphere, seemed to bend toward me as if to welcome my hope. I sported in the sensation. But for a little while only. Beyond the statue rose solid parallelograms of upright, gigantic blocks, pierced with countless holes that looked like the barred windows of prison cells. The blocks towered dark, frowning and inhospitably repelling. A vague fear came over me. I felt as if I were about to enter through the gates of a mighty fortified place where my hope would be smothered and where the blue dome would be visible only as a patch, from the bottom of some deep cañon.

It was the evening of what had been a glorious day in early May when I landed. I was too bewildered to have any clear impression of the place. I was rushed, almost against my will, along the overhead iron rails, to the sound of the clanging of bells and the booming of laden cars, to my lodging for the night. I felt as if I had been flung into a maelstrom. It was as if I were one of thousands who were all being catapulted at some invisible target by some mighty hand that had taken us in its grasp. I finally found myself, panting and mentally scattered, in the vestibule of a hotel. An hour later I stole out to find my sky. I found it at last by the aid of some stars. It was no longer bending over me. It had removed itself far, far away, and I

could see but an oblong section of it stretching flat and spangled over the tops of gigantic buildings. Only toward the hills of Jersey did I see it again, and there it glowed and burned and shot rainbow colors of such fulsome beauty that hope fluttered once more. I made little attempt to wander far. I was bruised and ill. I lay down that the silent night might heal me. The silent night never came. The clanging and clashing and dull, distant booming kept me awake until the dawn began stealing into my room. Then only the sounds ceased, but for a moment, and in the interval I lost consciousness.

It was some years before I really regained consciousness. I had received a stunning blow from some hidden fist that had sent me sprawling and seeing lights in a mist. But I rose again a new man with a new heart in me. Gradually my complacent egotism became changed into an assertive determination. I began to realize that I was but one among many others, and that we were all striving, working, pressing for life and power. I realized the city's spirit by day as a beautiful, energizing being filled with a passion for accomplishment, and with a fierce desire for success. Her beauty was for the young, the keen, the alert, for those who are impelled and empowered by a master will. She called on them with a heartening bugle voice to dare bravely and do worthily. She pointed to the statue resting on the waters of the bay with one hand, and with the other to the flag waving silently from the sunlit columns. In secret whisper and outward gesture she said to them: "Make me grow also in the beauty of their spirit as you have in the beauty

of this landscape and sky, and I will serve you and abide with you always." Listening, I understood, and understanding, I labored.

When the day was about to close and the work was over, I saw the city's spirit at twilight. I watched her then grow into being, and stood afar off and caught her rising like an Aphrodite from the sea of misty evenings and the glow of molten gold that outvied the sunsets as it spread its illuminating lines along the pavement of the great Avenue and over the buildings of the seething Broadway. This was the time of my fulfilment of joy. Spring and summer, autumn and winter would find me waiting, watching for her nightly rebirth, and always gazing fascinated by her ever-changing, enchanting beauty.

I dared not face her at night. I had known the spirit of London at such a time, and it was a terrifying thing. A stealthy vampire, it stole as a ghoul-like shadow, with only its fascinating eyes and scorching breath to tell me of its presence. And London was the metropolis of a civilization two millenniums old; a civilization that had had time in which to grow in dignity, urbanity and courtesy. What must New York, a city of yesterday, be like, where not a day passes that does not demand and receive its sacrifice of souls?

When I did see her at night, I knew another New York. Her secret was revealed as I saw the strong, the wise, the cunning, the mighty men of the day, cleansed of the dust of toil, pouring out of their homes into the great highways of the metropolis, straining and stretching for an embrace, and giving up all they had toiled for by day for a kiss from the

lips of this wondrous queen of the night. I saw a bacchanal's and a satyr's dance to the music of a siren's silvery scintillating laughter. It swept the streets, filled the restaurants and echoed along the corridors of brilliantly lit pleasure palaces. The goddess of the day was metamorphosed into a reckless Bacchante. The city had given itself up to a carnival. Towers and turrets, pinnacles and spires were lost in a sky of inky blue above, while below every foundation burned and glowed in a white heat. The City of Endeavor had become the City of Pleasure. When the dawn broke nothing remained but a silence, wan and pale. The place was like a whited sepulchre.

Not by night not yet by day do I find the city's spirit fulfilled. Neither in maturity nor in barren passion do we realize the beneficent, kindly and human companion of the lady of our dreams. It is at twilight that this being is really herself, and it is then that we find ourselves in her reality. When the day is melting into night, and the silvery air is stilled with the stress of expectant revelations, our Lady of Hope rises and beckons us homeward. She is no longer the dictating deity of the day; she is the Guardian Angel of the fireside, whispering to us the deep secrets of abiding happiness. Her breath is veils of unfolding and enfolding mystery wreathing in many colors and transfiguring the city's architecture. Towering turrets are palaces of Aladdin; the burning broad-based columns rise as clouds of incense offered to the glory of accomplished labor and the gods of the hearth. Cars, laden with men and women, tired and newly eager, move in lines of

light. The great square castles by the riverside twinkle into a new life with their thousands of electric lamps, and what was before a solid mass is now but a scarcely visible wraith. Brooklyn Bridge, the graceful lady of the day who flies the river in one dancing step, is now a dream of webs coruscating with brilliant jewels. The spire of the Singer Building is a black cloud pierced with luminous rifts and outlined in glowing beads. Up from the distant shining pavement rise, in tier on tier of lights, the stories of the Flatiron Building, in the ascending repetitions of a passion fugue. To the east of it looms the spectral giant of the Metropolitan Tower, its heart lit up and its gilded head flaring with a beacon's light over the misty sea of the city's murmuring pulsations. The great cañon of Fifth Avenue canopied with spangled deep ultramarine, sends along a living stream of moving shadows, parti-colored, now white, now purple, now black, a procession of spectral forms climbing to the white horizon at the cañon's mouth, where St. Patrick's Cathedral sends its two white prayers into heaven. The floating island of Manhattan is become an enchanted fairyland, and under the spell of its embracing beauty the tired heart and wearied brain are refreshed and reanimated, eager to welcome the coming of the city's night queen.

This is the time at almost any season of the year, when I say to my friend from England, "Come, let us take a walk up the Avenue." Then we stroll with the procession, glancing in at hostelries, admiring châteaux through wooded alleys of the park, beyond the fire-tipped heights of Morningside, to the

splendid esplanade bending and embracing the magnificent river now changed into a broad sea of molten gold.

"This is New York," I add, and my friend is moved with wonder and awe. He looks in mute astonishment at the towering façades of the huge blocks of homes transfigured now in the glow of the dying sun's light and turns from them to the shimmering river, and the black palisades of Jersey. "What an achievement!" he exclaims. "This must be the city of the Olympians."

"No," I answer, "not at all of Olympians, but of men and women like ourselves. And they have built it out of Hope, the Hope of the New World that was born of the despair of the Old World."

We sit on the wide veranda of the Claremont with the water clear below us. To the north the river sweeps in a magnificent curve and ends in a line of serried hills now utter black against the pure white of the dying sun's light. To the south we see the upright masses of buildings gleaming with their lights and smoking in the vapor-laden atmosphere. The river itself shimmers and waves like shining, molten brass. Tug-boats and ferry-boats, barges and launches cut black lines into this living, heaving liquid. Sounds come from every side; here, the music from the orchestra within; there, the warming megaphonic toots from the river craft; behind, the dull booming of the city waking into a new life, and among all these the silvery laughter of women and the cries of joyous promenaders. It is the time of blessedness.

There is in the hour of twilight a special appeal

which is neither in the day nor in the night. It is as if Nature were then unbending herself from her imperious mood to talk with us in our own human language. By day and by night she is herself in all her stern majesty. We can but hope that what we are then finding out about her is the truth of her, for she herself remains unresponsive to our calls, royally indifferent. But at twilight she is another being. Her reality seems uncertain to the eye and incomprehensible to the mind; but we feel we know her. Not by the mind do we realize this knowledge; it comes as a conviction. Emotions arise in us, unbidden, as if in response to some whispered appeal from without. We hear messages and respond to them. We are in communion with an invisible existence in a language not of human invention, yet unforgettably intelligible. Everything is speaking it, we with the others. Trees and hills, river and road, field and sky, cloud and star, all are talking to us and we to them. It is the hour of reunion, and Nature invites us to communicate with her. But her salon is neither the wide ocean, nor the great prairie, nor the aisled forests, nor yet the gardens or the cathedral closes; it is the mighty metropolitan city built by human hands and mated to God's landscape; the city in which the art of man has been made a part of the landscape and sky. For here all may meet and embrace Mother Nature's living truth. She knows that during the day and night we are too much taken up with our ambitions and desires—so that she steals away at those times to the hills and forests, and is alone, for we rarely visit her there. But as we are a

part of her, and as we alone can express her as she longs to be expressed, she needs us. She comes, therefore, but she takes us unawares, and the twilight hour is the witching hour. Some day we shall build our cities with this understanding of her, and then they will be as inevitable as the everlasting hills, and our life in them free and joyous.

FIFTH AVENUE AND THE BOULEVARD SAINT-MICHEL

FIFTH AVENUE AND THE BOULEVARD SAINT-MICHEL

"O, for one hour of youthful joy!
Give back my twentieth spring."

THUS murmured to himself Michael Weaver as he strolled aimlessly along the broad pavement of New York's avenue-promenade, one delightful blue and gold evening in April. The air was like wine; the brilliant light reflected from the white stone of the buildings, silver in its tone, sharpened outlines and made silhouettes of the few belated home-goers and strollers like himself; the deep, rich ultramarine of the sky, already spangling with the twilight stars, seemed like a silken canopy of blue tightly stretched above the cañon of the street; and the atmosphere was laden as if with the aromas of numberless anticipated enjoyments and loves. Surely that scent came from Angèle's hair? Ah, dear little Angèle! What was she doing now? And that stray breeze, did it not bring with it the odor of the markets of the *Quartier* when the lilacs are out in Paris? Oh, the lilacs of Paris! The tears welled up to his kindly brown eyes as his heart cried the words.

Yes, eight years had gone by, and here he was again in New York, lost in the loneliness of its seething thoroughfares, a stranger in a land which, though it had given him birth, was to him now as a strange land. True, the light and the sky were still lovely, the air was strength-giving; these,

too, were magnificent structures, showing a barbaric daring in the architect-builders. But the people, oh, the people! They were so cold, so indifferent, so self-centred, so ignorant and careless of beauty! Life was impossible among them. The place was but a whited sepulchre for frustrated ambitions, a graveyard of lost ideals. Look at Fifth Avenue, and *think* of the Boul' Mich'! He smiled in supreme disdain. What a contrast! Idealism and materialism—light and darkness—culture and ignorance—hope and despair—joy and misery—life and death! Proper synonyms for the two places; and he smiled again at the mental picture he made of the table of words.

He had gone to Paris, when twenty years of age, fired with an ambition to become a great painter. He had entered into the life of the Latin Quarter and had found himself at home in it. He had grown there in knowledge of his art and in dexterity of his craft. It had nursed his hopes and deepened his joys. Life had been worth living. It was good to be with friends, and it was a kindly place, asking not too much for the privilege of its citizenship. He had loved a little, and had found a quiet, simple happiness in his love. But he could not go on living there always. Even the Quarter must, sooner or later, be paid in money for food and rent; and his money had given out. Furthermore, he had acquitted himself master in his art, and he had been told that he could get better prices for his pictures in New York. And better prices meant that he would the more quickly be able to come back. He would leave the Boul' Mich', for

a short time, and try his luck on Fifth Avenue. But he would come back; oh, yes, he would come back.

He hardly recognized New York as the same city he had known as a boy. It was all so different —so much more imposing and so much more overwhelming. The streets were changed, and the people were not the same. He had been now nine months in New York. He had walked the Avenue until he knew by instinct every building on both its sides from Madison Square to the Plaza. He had carried his canvases from dealer to dealer, and had been received and dismissed, sometimes with polite, and sometimes with brusque, attentions. The little money he had scraped together, over and above his fare from Paris, he had lived on, during these trying months, with painful husbandry, at the rate of twenty cents a day. When almost on the verge of starvation and despair, he had met Finch, and Finch, the good angel, who had seen his work with seeing eyes, had opened his doors to him, and had befriended him in his time of sorest need. This had been the one bright ray of God's sunlight that had visited him in what was become for him a City of Dreadful Night.

For nine months, he had tramped the streets, looking eagerly and wistfully for a face that might touch his gentle spirit with a human grace; but, until quite lately, he had found not one. Every face he had looked at was stern, and hard, and cruel. If one smiled, the smile was arrogant or self-complacent, or wooing for a service to be obtained. If one laughed, it was at some obscene jest, or because of a satisfaction at a successfully

achieved sharp practice. Things of beauty were not bought for the joy they gave, but for the price paid; and the higher the price, the more loudly was it proclaimed with unctuous iteration. Culture there was none. He had met many people of so-called enlightenment; but he had found them superficial and hollow. It was a veneer culture—nothing more. When he scratched it, never so lightly, the common wood showed itself beneath. Oh, yes, they were polite and pleasant, but the politeness and pleasantness meant little. These were but baits to catch the innocent fish. He was soon shown the rough side when it was found that he was but a poor devil of an artist who had nothing to give. And how expensive it was merely to live! Food and clothes and rent swallowed money—literally devoured it. What a price to pay for such a privilege!

It had been so different in Paris! Paris also was beautiful, but beautiful in a very appealing and a very intimate way. In Paris one could always find a kindred spirit to whom one could speak, if not heart to heart, then certainly with an assurance of obtaining sympathy, and without the blighting fear of ridicule and of being misunderstood. In New York the talk was all of money, money, money, and business, and the stock-market, and values. Values! He smiled, unconsciously, as he murmured the word of the art-world, thinking of the difference in the meaning of the double uses to which the word was put. In Paris, he could drop in at a *cabaret* with the certainty of meeting a brother in hope or a fellow in thought.

Here, the restaurants were for the rich only. There were no restaurants for artists. How could there be, where there were no artists? These so-called artists were in business, not in Art. And where should these go but to the places where business men went? They were tradesmen, like the rest. And even if he could afford them, the restaurants and hotels were but desert-places for him. True, he had met Arthur Finch in one of them; but Finch was only one in five millions. He was kind and good, and a fine fellow, but even Finch did not know all that an artist felt in his innermost heart.

In Paris he had painted and had expressed himself. If he had made little money, he had, at any rate, found appreciation and encouragement.

Matisse knew he could beat him at his own game, and Matisse was no small man even though he had begun to prostitute his genius for gain. Matisse had admired his work, and thought it remarkable, had acknowledged his wonderful sense for color. Even Cézanne had smiled his approval! Cézanne, the Master! Weaver stopped himself in his walk, arrested by the mere sound of the august name. *"C'est un homme!"* he murmured piously. Paris alone could breed such a man! In New York Cézanne would have died in a season. Its hot-house atmosphere would have shriveled his heart and dried up the fountains of his inspiration. Oh, to be near him again; to be back once more, if but in that poor attic *au cinquième!* Better a crust there than a feast at the silvered table of the Dutch House, even with Finch as host. Ah, yes, Finch had been very kind. He had shown his paintings in the Gallery of the

Golden Disk; but it had done no good. The people, poor ignorant things, the people had come, had looked, and had left, thinking the man who had painted them was mad. A single canvas had found a purchaser, and he, probably had bought it out of a feeling of charity and pity for the artist. *Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!* Is it right—is it right that the finest flowers of the human soul should be nipped in the bud? Is it just that rascality and ignorance should prevail, and the chicaner conquer? Is it fair that the ladder of fame and success should be for mountebanks, and the chariots of ease for charlatans? Was it impossible for him to make even a little money by his work? He feared it was. He did not know how to be insincere, and to put on a false face with a smile. It was not in his nature, either, to pander to the degraded tastes of bloated plutocrats. He could not do these things and be true to his art. And yet he had been told that New York was the art-market of the world. Rich Americans were generous patrons of art. Patrons, indeed! Patronizers, yes; but patrons! Faugh!

Others had succeeded because they knew the ropes. They were better business men than they were artists. They could play politics, and could talk glibly at their exhibitions to the fine ladies who came, and entertain the critics with luncheon and cigars. The critics! He laughed bitterly as he uttered the word. What did these penny-a-liners know of art? They did little else than drool out, parrot-like, their jargon of "artistry." And if they did know, they wouldn't dare to write honestly for

fear of offending the editor. They were in the swim, with the rest. It was all a game. The artist toadied the dealer, the dealer toadied the critic, the critic toadied the editor, and the editor toadied the advertiser.

Thinking these thoughts, Weaver had arrived at his lodging. Wearily he mounted the four flights of dark, dingy, creaking stairs of a house reeking of numberless indescribable odors, and laid himself down on his hard bed.

The day following was a lordly day, glorious with sunshine and clean air. It had rained a little during the night, and the rain seemed to have washed crystal clear the atmosphere of the magnificent high-road as Weaver trod it on his way to the Dutch House to meet Finch. He had been up since four o'clock, working on a portrait—a commission Finch had obtained for him. He had done a day's work with satisfaction to himself, and he was glad.

Certainly, it was splendid, this gorgeous avenue, with its endless perspective lost in the blue of its narrowed horizon. The tall structures appeared to him as broad columns of aspirations—fire-offerings of ambition to the Lord of Hosts. The pointed spires of St. Patrick's Cathedral shot white hopes into a sky of uplifting light. He straightened himself as he walked. He was feeling the mysterious power which emanated from this wonderful marriage of God's art with man's art. In an unconscious expansion of himself through the subtle influence of this power, he thrilled in responsive ecstasy. It was an experience he had rarely known

in Paris. It lifted him up and bore him gallantly along, his face transfigured from the renewed accession of strength which the brave show and the brave air imparted to him.

"Not in vain the distance beckons. Forward, Forward, let us range. Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change."

Tennyson's lines, learnt by him at school, came back to him. He chanted them aloud, again and again, his steps keeping time to the rhythm, and thus chanting, found himself arrived at his destination.

They were all there, sitting at a long table in the centre of the spacious and high-ceilinged café. Finch, with his great shock of grizzled hair, and brown eyes glinting through *pince-nez,* was at the head; and little podgy-faced Church, smiling as usual, at the foot. Room was made for Weaver, who was heartily welcomed, between the pale-faced and kindly-eyed Zerxes, the caricaturist, and the light-haired Nelson Hardy, the art critic, with his aggressive jaws and sharp blue Norwegian eyes. John Seaman, the water-color landscape painter, with his thin, elongated nose and long, dark hair matted over his forehead and almost hiding his eyes, sat opposite him. Next to Seaman, Charles Cockayne, critic and lecturer on art, leaned back portentously, his rubicund face and shelf-like nether lip speaking of complacent self-assurance. On Finch's right sat Stuyvesant Marsh, quiet and yet eager, nervously curling upward an evidently highly cherished blond moustache. On his left was James Foote, the reviewer and humorist, his pleasant, full-cheeked coun-

tenance made child-like and inviting by a pair of innocent, laughing, light blue eyes. Hewitt, the photographer, was also there, as were François Aiterre, an amateur in the right sense of the word, and Healey, a lawyer with a taste for polite letters.

So strange a conglomerate of contrasting individualities surely never gathered at one time around a table in the purlieus of the Latin Quarter! And yet, here were these sitting amiably in the most select of hostelries in New York's most famous of avenues. All claimed to be idealists, and each had his own way of asserting his claim; and a pronounced and uncompromising way it was, too. The table was free for all expressions of opinions; and, it must be said, expressions often came with reckless directness. The truth is, they were all egoists, each ready, at the first sip of the wine of success, to become intoxicated with the glory of achievement, and "make a fume out of the warder of the brain."

But Finch kept them in order. He was host and dominie in one. He led the conversation and deftly turned it into harmless byways if the discussion threatened to become too animated and personal. He scolded roundly if one proved too recalcitrant, and praised when a remark was happily put. He knew them all well. He had listened to their bitter cries in private confession, and had helped when help meant a self-realization and not a self-deterioration. He was acquainted with their griefs and had knowledge of their sins. They were his children—wayward at times, childish at other times, but earnest at heart, and sincere at all times.

Weaver looked around the table with a pleased

face. A comfortable sensation pervaded his body. The pure air and the rich appointments appealed to his love of cleanliness and order. He had seen nothing like this on the Boul' Mich'. The napery was spotless, and the silver shone dazzlingly in the light from the great lustred electrolier above. Busy, yet quiet and devotedly attentive waiters, hovered about. One of them offered him, bowingly, the menu-card for the day framed in silver. He took it nervously, barely glancing at the long list of tempting dishes, and quietly whispered his order for roast-beef and a baked potato. As he handed back the card, he heard Finch's voice.

"How goes the work, Seaman? Have you done anything since you came back?"

"A little; but I haven't had much time. I'm busy getting ready for the show at your place."

"That's right. Next month we shall show the Rodin drawings; but after that's over, it will be your turn."

"I'll be ready by then. But, say, I've been working on that Flatiron building, and I think I've got it, once for all. I've got it floating in the sky, mounting into clouds of gray, and gold, and ultramarine. I never was so pleased with anything I ever did before."

"Good for you, Seaman! You can do it, if anyone can," replied Finch warmly.

Weaver had been listening eagerly. Finch had given him his chance, but nothing had come of it. Perhaps Seaman might fare no better. He thought it well to interpolate advice.

"I hope, Seaman, you'll not forget to put into

that Flatiron picture of yours the feeling of its fourth-dimension quality—the consciousness of a great and overwhelming sense of space-magnitude in all directions at one time."

"My dear Weaver," and Seaman permitted a smile to steal over his thin face, "I know exactly what you mean. I'll try all I can to put it into the picture; but you know it's not easy to live up to your standard."

"Oh, Weaver's got the fourth-dimension-quality bee humming in his bonnet!" exclaimed Hardy, his jaws chopping the words as he ejected them from his mouth.

"You can say what you like, Hardy, about my fourth-dimension-quality, but I don't expect an art-critic to know art," and Weaver's eyes shot light.

"Now, don't let us get on that subject again," cried Finch. "If Cockayne keeps his promise he'll write an article on it. What I'm interested in now is the Rodin show. And I tell you it'll be an eye-opener. If the press took so much notice of the Matisse exhibition, I wonder what they'll say when they see the Rodins. Say, but we're waking them up!" And Finch vented a gleeful laugh.

"Oh, the critics are all in with the dealers," snapped Seaman.

"Yes," jerked out Hardy, thrusting his jaw forward to emphasize his remark, "and the critics have got to look out for the editors. Think of the advertisers! It isn't always the critics that are to blame."

"Good for you, my boy!" exclaimed Church. "What between the dealer and the editor it looks

as if an art-critic's life ought to be quite a happy one."

"Happy as far as the dealer is concerned," laughed Marsh, "but what about the editor?"

"He'd better pack his grip," snorted Hardy, "if the editor catches him!"

"Well, isn't the dealer enough?" asked Church. "It looks to me as if a nice little nest might be feathered from the pickings from him alone. What's the difference between a stock-broker and an art-critic? You don't know? Well, I'll tell you. One deals in shares and the other shares in deals." The loud laugh that followed Church's reply was broken into by Finch, who smilingly chided Church for his levity.

Weaver looked at Church with amused, meditative eyes. He had often met the little man, and had always found him quite the reverse of flippant, and had enjoyed his keen remarks. To-day, mischief played rampant over the mobile, homely face. He preferred the serious side of him, however, and attempted to draw it out.

"Mr. Church," he said, in his soft, melancholy voice, "don't you find that the critics' attitude toward art is but on a plane with the general attitude of the people of this country toward all high ideals?"

Church turned quickly toward his questioner, and asked shortly, "What do you mean?"

"I mean that everybody here does things, not for the sake of doing them well, but for the sake of the money they may get."

"Well, what of it? What are you doing things

for? Aren't you hoping to get money for what you do?"

"In a way, yes; but that's not my prime motive. I paint a picture because I love to paint. I want to re-create what I see and feel so that others may see and feel with me."

"Well, if what you see and feel is worth seeing and feeling by others, it's worth paying for, isn't it?"

"That's not an answer to my question."

"Weaver means, Church," explained Finch, "that he would paint for nothing if he could get appreciation. He is not thinking of the money when he is doing his work."

"I know quite well what Weaver means. But he happens to have approached the subject in a way that irritates me, and I am purposely ignoring his meaning. And besides, what Weaver means is not to the point of his original remark. He began by an intended criticism of the public for its unsympathetic attitude toward art and all high ideals, and he explained that everybody did things for the sake of the money they could get and not for the sake of doing the work. In so far as the artist himself is concerned, I confess I can't see the difference between working for money and working for fame. In both cases his object is other than the mere doing, and in each case the object is a sufficiently worthy incentive. Some reward, I take it, is necessary to him, otherwise he'd soon give up working altogether; and it is indifferent to me whether the object is material in the shape of money, or spiritual in the form of fame. I am somewhat tired of this belittling of money. It's a good thing if you can

afford to do your work in order to fulfill your genius; but artists are not angels; they are creatures of flesh and blood, like the rest of us, and a good home, a well-filled stomach and pocket-book, a decent suit of clothes, and the bodily comforts that money can buy are, to my mind at any rate, just as necessary and just as helpful to the artist as they are to the ordinary man in the street. I have yet to be convinced that the right-minded artist need be less an artist because he's getting money for his work. If an artist wants to consider himself superior to the common wants of humanity, I can't see why he grumbles at his poverty. Why blame the public? What's the public got to do with your motive? By all means, do your work for the work's sake; but if the public doesn't want your work, don't blame it for not buying it. That's what *I* mean."

"Perhaps, Mr. Church, I've not quite made it clear to you what I do mean," gently insisted Weaver, "the people place more importance on the money-value than they do on the art-value of the work. They have no art-sense; they don't understand art, and they don't care for it. It doesn't mean anything to them."

"What other value would you have them place on it? By your own words they are ignorant and uncultured. They don't understand art, you say. How are they going to understand it? And when they do, how are they going to show their appreciation of it other than by translating it into dollars and cents? And, if we come down to it, how do you understand art? How do you distinguish the art-value of a work from its money-value? Have you a secret art-measurer of your own?"

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" chorused Cockayne, Hardy, Seaman, and the rest.

"Say, Church," laughed Cockayne, "isn't that going a bit too far? Surely there is such a thing as Art? And we do know the difference between true Art and false Art!"

"Very well, then; if you know all about it, what's your test for what you call true Art? Answer me that!" And Church emphasized his question by a thump on the table.

A short silence followed. It was broken by Finch.

"That's rather a big question, isn't it, Church, to answer off-hand?"

"We're discussing a big subject. Have you any standard by which to judge art; by which you are able to say this is good and that is bad; or this is Art with a capital A, and that is art without the capital?"

"Your question is a silly one, Church," replied Hardy; "there are many things to be taken into consideration before one can arrive at a judgment about a work of art. There is technique, first; and there's color, and composition, and form, and, above all, there's the fulness of the impression it is intended to convey."

"If I might venture to answer your question, Church," said Cockayne, "I should say that a work of art must be judged by its success or failure to realize Beauty."

"All right, Hardy, you'll find out soon enough how silly my question is. My answer to you, Cockayne, is that what you say does not help me, because I want to know what you mean by Beauty.

The same difficulty is there as it was before, only you've moved it from the word Art to the word Beauty. Who is to decide what is Beauty? How are we to measure it? The beauty revealed by a Correggio is not the beauty revealed by a Velasquez. Titian's 'Venus' and Rembrandt's 'Lesson in Anatomy' are both works of art, but the revelation of beauty is altogether different in each. Besides, what was beautiful to the painters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is not beautiful to the painters of the twentieth century—just as what was once right morally is now wrong, and *vice versa.* I used to hear critics belittle Rubens; but only the other day Stecker was dithyrambic in his praise of him. He was the master of them all, Stecker said. If we are to look to beauty to help us we shall find that our standard of beauty keeps changing just as our standards of conduct and fashion change."

"But we are more eager now to possess Rembrandts and Titians and Velasquez than ever we were before," remarked Cockayne. "Why do we pay such enormous prices for their pictures if we did not find them beautiful?"

"I don't think we pay the enormous prices for the sake of their beauty. I think it's the fashion just now to want them. A hundred and fifty years ago you could have bought a car-load of Rembrandts for the price you'd have to pay for one now. Ruskin thought Whistler was a charlatan—to-day many of us would scrape our last dollar to own a Whistler. When Benjamin West was President of the Royal Academy of London his pictures brought prices that we laugh at. To-day you could probably buy all

the pictures he ever painted, that are not stacked away in stupid galleries, for the price he got for one. And, I suppose people in West's time must have thought them beautiful—if that were really the standard by which they then judged them. Did Millet's 'Angelus' have less of beauty in it when he sold it for a few hundred dollars than it has now when it would sell for a hundred thousand?"

"The fact that the people don't always see the beauty is no reason for concluding that a painting is not great art," answered Cockayne. "Because I am blind is no argument that the sun is not shining."

"That's true; but how is one to know when one can see? How is one to recognize beauty? One man looks at a Matisse and sees in it nothing but what is ugly and repulsive. Another looks at it and finds it wonderful in its power to suggest the beauty of the human form and the appealing pathos of human life. Who is the seeing man, and who the blind one? Who shall judge? I am asking for a standard by which we all may abide. I am searching for a light by which we all, ignorant and educated alike, may walk through the dark mazes of this art-world. It's no use going to the critics and writers on art; I have found these do not agree with each other. They are so busy proving each other foolish that I have come to the conclusion they know little more than the rest of us."

"Mr. Church," and Weaver's quiet voice sounded an authoritative note, "Art is not for the blind or the ignorant. Art is for the seeing and the knowing. Art is its own standard, its own criterion. It is independent of any judgment. Art is the Idea made manifest as Beauty."

"Ah, a definition at last! Art is the Idea made manifest as Beauty! Excellent, i' faith! If only we knew what the Idea was! Weaver would have it, I take it, that Art is a Divinity poised there in the high heavens for the worship and the adoration of mankind. And, I suppose, the Idea is the private revelation vouchsafed the artist by this Divinity? And Beauty, the reappearance of this revelation in plastic form, eh?"

Weaver nodded eagerly as if pleased that he had been so well understood.

"Well," continued Church, "I know now why we call ourselves Idealists. I am not saying that Weaver hasn't got hold of something. I may come back to what he is trying to say another day. But, if Weaver is right, why cry out against a public that doesn't see the Idea in the manifestation? May there not be something wrong or something wanting in the manifestor? How does the artist himself know he has succeeded in revealing the Idea as Beauty. We Idealists must be very careful to keep our feet on earth if we would have the public know what we are doing or what we are talking about. Aye, and if we would be sure that we ourselves have the revelation aright. For, however we may refine our thinking, as artists we have to deal with the concrete. Our most entrancing visions have to be translated into visible forms before they can be seen by others, and this limitation of the medium is often lost sight of by artist-dreamers. Keep your feet on earth, I say, and you need not fear how high you stretch your head. The Beauty we talk of must become plastic if it is to be realized at all."

"If I have answered your question," interrupted Weaver, "let me hear what you have to say; for it is important to me. What have you to say against my original statement—that the people of this country value art not for what it is, in and for itself, but for what it is worth in money. Perhaps you will say that money is the public's way of estimating art?"

"I am coming to that, Weaver, and you'll know all I mean. For the moment, I will accept your definition, that Art is the Idea made manifest as Beauty. I don't like the definition, because it's subjective and not objective; because it assumes a knowledge we haven't got. Beauty, like those other abstract terms, Right, Justice, Truth, is not a self-existing entity, independent of ourselves. From my point of view, I would say that Beauty is a state of consciousness. As a state of consciousness it will vary as we vary. Just as the right, the just, the true of yesterday may not be right, and just, and true to-day, so what we call beauty now may not be the beauty of the future. These words are, after all, but abstract terms for us. They may or they may not stand for absolute realities. I confess I am afraid of these abstractions that lead to absolute realities. I never could make out what an absolute reality meant, if it were not a term to hide our ignorance of what we were talking about. I prefer to be content with the experience; because then I am talking about what I know. And what I know, and what I will stake my life on, does exist, in my own state of consciousness, my own capacity for enjoyment. I dare not deny that or I should deny life itself.

"Keeping that in mind, I would define art as a particular form of imparting pleasure. And by pleasure I mean not only the evanescent but the permanent enjoyments. This definition includes every mode of art expression, and allows for any and every possibility of delight-giving experience. Under this sky may play the poet, painter, and musician, as well as the actor, novelist, and dancer. Each of their arts is, if you like to say so, a revelation of the Idea made manifest as Beauty, but each is better understood, and only really known by us as a means for joy. But I will go further, and say, that each means nothing, and is worth nothing, if it does not mean our joy."

"But," said Finch, "why quarrel about words if both definitions lead to the same result? Your definition includes but one side of art, and the lesser side; Weaver's is a much more impressive one. What you call experience he raises to the dignity of a divinity."

"I know it is but one side of it; but I deny it is the lesser side. It is the only side which can possibly concern us as living and working beings. I won't deny Weaver's definition, and I will make you a present of its impressiveness. I won't deny it, because its denial, on my part, would mean that I knew what he was talking about. I don't know what he means by the idea, or by beauty in the abstract. And I can't deny what I don't know. But I do know my own sensations in front of an idea, if you like, made manifest as beautiful. I do know when a painting delights me, or a poet enthralls me, or an actor pleases me, or a musician

enchants me. And I prefer to trust to these experiences rather than to a metaphysical abstraction, even when raised to the dignity of a divinity. I prefer to insist on them for Weaver's sake as well as my own. And by Weaver, I mean you all—idealists in creating as well as idealists in criticism; idealists in art as well as idealists in life. By apotheosizing your Beauty you are in danger of becoming the creature of the Frankenstein you have thus raised. Art is our servant and not our master. It is less than life. Your art is become to you a veritable autocrat and tyrant. It dominates your minds. It is the result that counts; it is the result that seals the fate of all work. Your art-god won't help you there. You yourself are the creators. And the result is known in terms of pleasure—in the experiences of joy that the work gives—in the delight it imparts even to the common public Weaver so ruthlessly despises."

Church stopped for a moment to light the cigarette that had gone out. Finch made a movement as if to say something, but Church raised his hand.

"Let me go on, please, Finch. It is this insistence on abstractions which makes bad idealists and bad egoists of us. We think we know it all when we have clothed our naked ignorance in the garment of a fine-sounding word with a capital letter. We are only hiding our ignorance and making it look ridiculous. By all means, let us be egoists, if our egos may thereby be moved to do something that will make the world happier, that will give it joy in the thing done. But our egoism is a vulgar

egotism and a foolish vanity if it makes us despise others because they do not see with us. And our criticism of them for not appreciating what we have done, or what we think we may do, becomes childish petulance."

"Weaver is not of that kind," remonstrated Finch, warmly.

"But, Church," interposed Foote, "how does your definition of art touch the original criticism made by Weaver? I thought there was a great deal in what he said."

"How? In every way. If the artist succeeds in giving pleasure to a public that doesn't know, and, by so doing, makes it aware of beauty, then that public must and will recognize the service he has rendered. It must, because pleasure is its very life. And it will recognize it in the only way it can recognize it justly—by paying him money. The money it thus gives is its expression of appreciation—and the best expression; for it thereby renders the artist independent of caprice and whim. It pays for laughter; it pays for good food, for good comedy, for good music, for good poems, for fine oratory, for amusing and pleasing tales, for any and all forms of art that arouse in it a sweeter, deeper, and more vivid sense of the joy of life. That's what an artist is for. That's what a genius means—to be, with the magic of his creative imagination, a joy-giving wizard. And how better can the public appreciate him than by freeing him from sordid necessities, that he may continue to give joy? I am not saying that the public does not make its own mistake about money. It makes the same mistake about Money

that we do about Beauty—it writes it with a capital letter—it apotheosizes it, and so becomes the slave of its home-made divinity. But before you blame the public for this mote in its eye, had you not better first take out the beam from your own eyes?

"The public may be ignorant and stupid, but it is so only for a time. Sooner or later it wakes up, and when it does, it is very generous—too generous, indeed. It makes mistakes, of course, but these mistakes are due rather to its eagerness to welcome the slightest effort that is put forth heartily to serve its enormous appetite for pleasure, or that will kindle in its heart the fire of a new hope. The public will give thousands for a wretchard daub, and may not glance at a work of genius. It will lose its head over a facile black-and-white draughtsman, and utterly neglect the fine insight of a caricature artist. It will spend nights listening to a tawdry musical-comedy, and grudge a cent for a great musician. But it is not altogether to blame. Art is long and life is short. Besides, it can afford to make mistakes. It is very rich. And it has plenty of time —its own time and posterity's time, also. Later, the daub will find a forgotten resting-place in the lumber room of some museum; the drawings of the facile draughtsman be jobbed at a junk-shop; the musical-comedy be vanished as the snows of yesteryear. Then the genius will come into his own, and his work be crowned with laurels. The half-gods must go before the gods arrive.

"The true artist, if he really accomplish great work, cannot be denied his fame. It may not come to him in his lifetime; but come it certainly will.

And the true artist must be content to wait. How long has God been painting his glorious sunsets and empurpled hills for his own joy to heedless and indifferent men and women? And He still continues to paint them. Now and then there comes a painter or a poet, or a simple man who sees with Him and shares in His joy. Then He is justified. The true artist must also be content to paint for his own joy; he must be to himself his own justification. But if he really accomplish great work, he will not have left out of it this joy-giving power. Let it radiate this influence and it will not be ill with him always."

"Is he, in the meanwhile, to starve?" asked Weaver. "Is it right, that genius should go hungry, while mediocrity grows fat and sits in the seats of the mighty?"

"There you go again with your 'is it right?' For the genius it seems to be, and no doubt is, very wrong. But have you ever asked yourself the question: Why am I a genius? Have you thought what it is to be a genius? It is to be filled with joy that the gods have chosen you to be the instrument of their mighty purposes. It is to be profoundly and ecstatically grateful in that to you is given the power to paint with the finger of God, and the gift to chant with the everlasting hills. Think of this, and you will not ask: Is it right? I know it is a hard doctrine I am preaching. But creation is impossible without suffering. Every mother knows that. But, oh, the joy when the child is born! To you, the genius, it is very wrong for genius to go hungry; but don't blame the public. The public is ignorant of you. It doesn't yet know

that you are a genius—that you are necessary to it. It knows that the children of mothers are necessary, and, therefore, it builds hospitals in which to tide the mothers over the days of their travail. Some day, perhaps, it may realize that the creatures of a genius's brain are also necessary to it, and then, it may be, it will build studios and homes, and provide maintenance for artists and poets until they shall have freed themselves from their travails. Until that time comes the genius, I am afraid, must go hungry, and suffer want for many days.

"But, I am forgetting. Didn't I understand you to say you were not working for the approval of the public? Didn't I hear you despise their money? Did I not hear you say something about manifesting the Idea in the form of Beauty? Then why grumble and complain? Why seek his alms and despise the alms-giver? Why, above all, be impatient if it takes the public a long time to see the beauty? Is it not taking you a long time to reveal it? Your power of revealing did not come to you in a night. Be, for a little while, grateful that you have been vouchsafed your revelation. Be delighted in thinking of the joy you are some day going to give. In the meantime, break stones on the highway, if necessary, for a living, and do your real work for your own joy. Let every stroke of your hammer ring the notes of a Marseillaise for your later freedom when you shall have acquitted yourself in the work God sent you to do. In this way you will hasten the time of your deliverance from the fetters of chance; and you will have achieved yourself the more fully just because you have suffered

your pilgrimage through the valley of humiliation. Then—and I am presuming that you have not yourself made any mistake about yourself—then, the public, which you now despise, will be only too eager to give you all the time you may need. Perhaps, you will tell me you will not want its help then? Yes, you will. Never make that mistake. You will want it then even more than you do now. Now, your body only is starving—then, you will work that your soul may not starve. And the public's appreciation will be your soul's salvation.

"Do not despise the public—neither its money nor its praise. In the last resort the public is the judgment-seat of all and every art. Its praise is precious as its sincere prayer for your generous forgiveness for the unthinking wrong it did you in the past; its money is its acknowledgment of the wrong done, and its encouragement to you to go on fulfilling yourself in the future. Yes, I plead for the public; and I plead especially for the public of these United States which is continually being made the butt of foreign condescension. As if other countries never lost its geniuses! As if this were the only country in which geniuses found no home! You are wrong when you compare the people of this country, as I have often heard you do, with the people of France and other European countries, to its detriment. The people of this country are young and in the making. They are busy making homes, and families, and a nation for themselves. A growing and a working people have less time for enjoyment than have the aged and the idle. In their pleasures they can but ape their elders,

and aping, show themselves, perhaps, often ridiculous, silly, and *gauche*. But give them time, and they, too, will learn wisdom, and find a real and living happiness. The wonder is that they do so well. But let them do well or ill, you will help them better, not by criticizing and decrying, but by offering them the best you have. Help them with your genius, and so advance them to a worthy place among the other civilizations of the world. If you are a true idealist, as well as a true artist, that is the least you can do. There, I've been twaddling so long that I've far out-stayed my luncheon hour, and I'll get a wigging when I get back to my cellar. Waiter, my check, please!"

Church paid his bill, rose, nodded to all round the table, and made his way to the door. He had barely reached it when he turned round and caught Weaver's eye looking wistfully after him. He beckoned, and Weaver rose and followed him into the avenue.

"Walk down with me, Weaver," he said quietly, "as far as the corner of the street where my office is. I want to say a few words to you privately. I'm afraid, my boy, I've just been saying many things that, perhaps, have hurt you. You'll believe me, I am sure, when I tell you I intended no discourtesy. But I was young once myself, and if I had had some one to talk to me then as I have been talking to you to-day, I'd have been a different man now. I'd have done something. I used to think as you are thinking, and all I did was to go on feeling angry and rebellious because others didn't see with me what a devil of a fine fellow I was. It ended in my frittering

away my time and doing nothing. I was so enamoured of my genius that I thought it wasn't worth while wasting its sweetness on the desert air. Well, I made a big mistake—the great mistake of my life. Now, I think so much of you and what you are capable of doing, that I don't want you to make the same mistake. Remember, it's your work and your work only that can justify you. I've heard you long for Paris again; for its sympathy and its helpful companionship. I say to you, here is your Paris, if you've got anything in you. If the right stuff is in you, produce it, and you'll be a free man in every sense. As for sympathy and helpful companionship, did you ever get in Paris what you got to-day? Did you ever meet a Finch in Paris? Did you ever know a friend there who energized you without enervating you, as you are finding here, in this Philistia of a New York? No, I am sure you never did.

"Now, my boy, if you can't afford to do the work you want to do, get a job at anything that will bring you in the price of bread and cheese and a shelter. When you've secured that, do your work in your spare time, in solitude and in silence. It will bring you your happiness in the end, I am certain of it. Do you imagine I am happy grubbing in my hole in the ground? But, 'I still have hopes my latest hours to crown,' and maybe, I'll crown them some day. For the present, I must grub.

"Look at that Flatiron building! There it is, stuck in the common rock. But, see, it mounts into heaven itself, a thing of beauty its sordid builders never dreamed of realizing. The sky has taken it

unto itself as a part of its own pageantry. Let it be the symbol of your life.

"And look back at this magnificent perspective! It breathes hopes from every tower and turret, and ends in a cloud of glory. Let that be the symbol of your native land. So long, Weaver, my boy! Remember, here is your Paris!"

Church walked rapidly away leaving Weaver standing at the street corner. Weaver followed the little man with his eyes, a soft beautiful smile playing around his lips, and saw him disappear down the steps of a basement. Turning, he slowly made his way northward, thinking, thinking. *"C'est un homme!"* he whispered to himself. But he was not thinking of Cézanne. He was thinking that, perhaps, it was not too late to find again his youthful joy. He looked up Fifth Avenue with far-seeing eyes and forgot the Boulevard Saint-Michel.

THE FAUBOURG SAINT BRON-NEX

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MICHAEL WEAVER was packing his easel and paint-box preparatory to going to the country. He had worked hard through a winter of more than the usual severity and had managed to scrape through with a surplus. Indeed, he had, for the first time in his life, opened a bank account. He had enough, so he calculated, to tide him over the summer, during which time he intended to make ready for the next winter's exhibition, when, if the fates would be but casually condescending, he might sell a sufficient number of canvases to enable him to visit Paris once again. It was becoming more and more of a necessity that he should see for himself what the newer men were doing there, for there was next to nothing of their work to be seen in New York. He had had recurring thoughts of Paris for this year, and had even made many elaborate calculations as to the length of time his money would hold out, but I had dissuaded him strongly from a venture so fraught with risk. He showed me his figures, but they spelt privation. Paris on two francs and a half a day would be Paris no longer. True, he had, once upon a time, managed it on less, but the memory of those days, he agreed with me, was not very pleasant to recall. Yes, he assented, it would perhaps be wiser to postpone the pilgrimage for another year and go into the country this year. So he rented a flat in the Bronx.

Certainly the Bronx region was not Fontainbleau, nor yet St. Cloud; but the park was beautiful in July and August, and cool breezes from the Sound swept the open spaces. He had always had a sentimental attachment for the district, ever since his father took him there, some fifteen years ago, for a day's outing. It was the first time he had walked on real country-growing grass and had seen great stretches of blue sky, free of tenement-house roofs. And the air had been so pure and invigorating!

We—Weaver, Black, the photographer, and I—were sitting gingerly on a folded truckle-bed encased in sacking, in the dreary attic Weaver had lived in for the past eighteen months. The room, in its dismembered state, presented a wretched appearance with a gloomy April afternoon's light streaking through the high, narrow window.

"This is an awful place to sit in, Weaver," I said, after he had pushed his strapped easel beneath the bed. "Let's go to Black's studio and get the girls to give us a cup of tea. Your things are all ready now for the expressman, and he isn't coming until to-morrow. What say you, Black?"

"By all means. Come along, Weaver, we can't give you any more help. Come and get the cobwebs brushed off you. And you can tell us what you said to Lifter, yesterday."

"Ha! ha! ha! Lifter! There's an ass for you, if you like!" and Weaver crowed again, dancing the while recklessly round the few feet of floor space left free of parcels and trunks. "He said he didn't know what I was driving at with my pictures. I told him I didn't care. I wasn't driving at him, anyway. He

didn't understand them, he said. I told him I didn't expect he could. I'd have been much astonished, I said, if he had understood them. You should have seen him look at me with his silly, sickly smile. That's why he roasted me in the *Morning Blatherer*. You've read the stuff? The same old twaddle, the same old meaningless 'arty' jargon. Sometimes I wonder if it doesn't nauseate those fellows who are compelled to drag out of their insides the stringy, Welsh-rabbity mess they call a critique."

"Now, Weaver," I put in soothingly, "don't get excited. Lifter's got to earn his living, and nobody cares a tinker's blessing for what he writes. I'm heartily sorry for any poor devil who is chained to such a galley. Let's get out of here, and into some fresh air."

"You're right," assented Weaver in a changed voice, as we were descending the creaking stairs of the old house. "I am sorry for them, but Lifter's a painter! You would think he should know better."

"Have you ever seen his pictures?" I asked, taking in a gulp of Fourteenth-street air, fragrant with the odors of delicatessen shops.

"No," answered Weaver, "I haven't."

"Well, if you saw them you wouldn't wonder how it is he writes as he does. Here's our car! Get aboard, boys, and don't forget the transfers."

Twenty minutes later we were in Black's studio, comfortably ensconced in armchairs and settle. A delightful change from Weaver's dusty attic was this spacious and comfortable roof-room.

"Now, Weaver," exclaimed Black, "tell us what Lifter really wanted of you."

"Oh, he came to interview me about Post-Impressionism—hateful words! He said the editor of *The Blatherer* had sent him. Everybody was talking about Post-Impressionism and nobody knew what they were talking about. Knowing that I had been a friend of Cézanne, and had worked with Henry Matisse, he thought I'd be the very man to help him."

"And did you?" I asked.

"I told him to read Lewis Hinde's book. I said he'd find there all that Post-Impressionism was not, and if he'd write the very opposite, the public would at once know what it was."

"What did he say to that?"

"He took what I said very seriously and told me he had bought the book but could make nothing of it. It was full of general statements that might mean anything and everything. Still, he said, it had been useful, because it had given him the names of the artists—fellows he had never heard of in his life."

"What did you say?"

"I advised him to get Meier-Graefe's study of Paul Cézanne, but he said he couldn't read German."

"Then you took pity on him, eh? It would be like you to do that."

Weaver smiled sheepishly. "To tell you the truth, I did. But please remember I hadn't read the stuff he printed this morning, or I'd have kicked him down stairs."

"That's all right, Weaver," I said, "what I want to know is what you really did say, and what he ought to have written. I'm seeking for light myself."

Weaver rose from the settle and placed his cup and

saucer on a small table near the sloping skylight window. He did not resume his seat, but began walking up and down the room, his hands behind his back, with head bent downward. I knew he was preparing himself for a big effort, for he appreciated nothing so much as a sympathetic audience. Stopping suddenly, he looked around at us all, and said:

"I began by telling him what an artist was. An artist, I said, observes, chooses and records. His record, in the form of a painting or canvas or board, is a plastic presentation of his choice of what he has observed in nature. To choose, for the purpose of a representation, is to perform the initial act in the process of creation. To create is not to make something out of nothing—it is to choose and to rearrange so that in the rearrangement there shall appear, in addition to the objects chosen, something that was not in them before. This something is the vision the artist alone saw; and this something his art must reveal for all to see.

"Now how does the artist work? To draw an outline of a form and to fill in that outline with colors is to do the work of a decorator. Puvis de Chavannes was such a decorator, and very able. The artist, however, does not proceed after this fashion. He knows that the mere juxtaposition of any two objects alters not only the colors of the objects but their forms also. I place a lemon next to a blue bowl and immediately the yellow of the lemon is diluted with the blue color of the bowl, and the blue of the bowl is, in its turn, affected by the yellow of the lemon. So it is in nature; there are no absolute colors, only gradations towards absolute colors.

Every color is relative to other colors near it. And the same is true of every form. The artist knows this. He realizes that the forms of objects are not fixed, not static, but dynamic. They seem to flow and to change. They actually do change, because forms are color masses and these change with the changing light which falls on them. A series of variously colored objects thus become a gamut of color masses, more or less fluid in their forms. It is a tone series, analogous to a chromatic scale in music, not definite things with definite outlines."

"Bully!" I exclaimed. "I've never heard it put so clearly. What did Lifter say to that? Did he see where your explanation was leading to?"

"He said nothing, but looked painfully puzzled. I went on to make myself clearer. The artists of the traditions, I said, by whom, I mean those trained in academies and schools, do not understand this fluid quality in the forms of objects, under the influence of light. They have been taught to treat forms as rigid and definite in outline. The result is their painting is never plastic; it is hard, flat and lifeless, and no amount of shading will make it other than hard, flat and lifeless. Their shading is colorless, being but a mere application of blacks. It is formless, without depth, because there is no light in it. The great principle, namely, that light is the creator of forms, is unknown to them. They paint, utterly ignorant of the fact that shadows also are due to the play of light, nay, they are light. They work as if Rembrandt had never lived. Nature knows no absolute black. It abhors black as it does a vacuum.

"The artist must, therefore, look on nature as mobile, as being never at rest. No matter how little light there may be, it is never absolutely absent. It varies only in intensity, but it is always present. So that forms are visible in the deepest shadows, or, if not actually visible to the eye, their presence should be felt and suggested. A decorator might shade his flat picture, but his shadings would look like holes. And this is what most artists do; they make holes instead of true shadow color-masses—that is to say, forms."

Weaver stopped for a moment and, looking around, he smilingly remarked:

"You see, I was purposely technical in my explanation, because I was talking to a painter as well as an art critic. But as I saw I was making little headway, I changed my argument. Mr. Lifter, I said, is it not the prime object of an artist to make his pictures what we call 'alive' and meaningful? Well, then, how can a picture be alive, or how can it express any meaning, if the painter fixes his objects on the canvas as if they had never moved? Look at almost any of the works of the academicians, and what do they represent? Either a lifeless human figure or a lifeless landscape of nature. I grant you they are prettily colored, but the coloring is that of flat decoration, even in the best of them. But stand before a painting by Cézanne, and immediately you are aware of something strange, something altogether different from the paintings you have been accustomed to see. You are, for a moment, puzzled. Why? Because Cézanne has painted not a fixed, immovable nature, but a plastic,

mobile nature. It is alive with movement, and it is so alive because his forms almost melt into each other. Study it carefully; give it time to grow on you, and you will realize that the man who did this thing was a profound thinker as well as a loving artist. The man literally lived the thing he painted. You call him a post-impressionist, because you like to label the new and wonderful fact by some commonplace understandable name. But by whatever phrase you ticket him, Cézanne is first and last, an artist.

"Your so-called impressionist recorded and fixed an impression. He did no more than the others did, only he gave his painting an atmosphere which suggested that the record was that of a fleeting impression. But his work was just as rigid and lifeless as the rest. We, who are proud to be the followers of Cézanne, are not concerned with impressions or post-impressions; we are only eager for life. It is not the momentary seeming of the fact we desire to reproduce, but the living, continuing fact. How wonderful would be that painting which truly expressed it! How difficult it is to achieve, only those know who have essayed the task. To succeed, is to be a creator, an artist in very truth. Here is a woman's form. Shall the artist make his picture of it a more or less faithful photograph of it, more or less prettily decorated in colors? Not at all. It must be so reproduced on the canvas that it shall repeat and suggest every possible play of its flesh and tissues. Clothe it in a robe and shall you picture a draped model? Surely that would be

banal! Shall you not, rather still picture a living form, but now robed and with its robes as an accident, so to speak, or as an adornment over which the body is master and with which it can do what it pleases? It is the living thing, not the dead fact, that must be the artist's inspiration and his goal. Let the artist study his medium so that he understands its utmost limits; then let him forget his medium so that he can show his absolute mastery of it. When he can do this his medium will not obtrude itself on the vision he is revealing. The marble statue is but dead stone if the eye sees only the marble. It will be a work of art when the eye doesn't realize that it is looking at a piece of marble, but is absorbed in the sculptor's creation. So it is with a painter who has succeeded in achieving a plastic presentation in colors of the vision of life nature helped him to see.

"You have probably seen the work of Eugène Carrère, the man, Whistler said, who must have been smoking in the nursery. Well, Carrère's work is the result of a pre-determined manner. He sought to obtain movement by dissolving the outlines of his figures into the surrounding atmosphere. Hence the smokiness at which Whistler jeered. Carrère did not understand, or if he did, he did not know how to realize it, that movement is in the figure, that it is the figure's life, and can be expressed only by the figure. Indefiniteness of outline is but a trick, an affectation by means of which to make up for incompetence in technique. Carrère saw what he ought to do; but he did not know how to do it. Twatchmann got nearer to

what we are trying to accomplish, and his work will be highly prized in the future.

"Post-Impressionism, so-called, is not a return to the method of the primitives. It is a return, if you like to say so, to the spirit of the primitives. The primitives had an exquisite love for their art. They felt the lovely spirit of the beauty in nature, and with true childlike simplicity they sought to reproduce that spirit. They couldn't draw, but this inability actually helped them. They were not impeded by art conventions in their direct attempt to reproduce the things they loved. Their technique was thus subordinate to the expression of their emotions. It is otherwise with the modern accomplished artist-draughtsman who, if he has an aim, subordinates it to his technique. He is compelled to do this because he is not master of his technique—he is a slave to it. In other words, he is, at best, but an able craftsman. But the Post-Impressionist knows how to draw and how to paint. He has studied and labored in the schools. But—and here's the tremendous difference between him and the academician—he of set purpose, compels his craft to serve him in his art. Not that he has as yet accomplished what he is trying to do, but most certainly he has demonstrated what the artist must do if painting is to be art in the only sense in which the word means anything.

"Art, if it have a value at all, is valuable because it is a reproduction by human effort of the beauty in nature. It is man's embodied presentation in various media of his emotional experiences of life. I maintain that such a result is not only unobtain-

able, but is actually made impossible by academic methods. For these methods lay stress on just those elements of art which are but the means and not the end of art. Schools by the thousand send out annually their regiments of prize-winners in drawing, painting and sculpture. What do they do after they leave the schools? Are they not repeating the formulas they learned by rote under the teachers? What else can they be expected to do when the prize is given, not to the genius who dares to swerve from established rules, but to the accomplished master of conventions? He has drawn from 'the life' an accurate and dry-as-dust reproduction so often, and has been kept down to the accuracy and dry-as-dustery of the method by so many maxims and measuring standards that he has lost what individuality of point-of-view he may have possessed. You can't expect him ever to see visions, let alone try to realize them in plastic forms. His forms never are plastic. They are always "models."

"Now what of beauty and what emotional experiences can such a prize-winner know? Why, he sees everything unrelated—each object is a thing in itself. That is why his painting is dead. The post-impressionist steps in here and says: 'Yes, it is well that you can draw and that you know how to use your paint and brushes; but these accomplishments are but the beginning of your real work. Your real work is to paint pictures that are reproductions of your experiences of life—pictures that are not flat and colored models, but are the living, palpitating beings—pictures that are not hard and

accurately measured designs, but that are tender and lovely and delightful, or strong and impressive and stirring. You are the creator. It is up to you to remelt the crude ore of objective facts, and, in the alembic of your creative imagination, precipitate, by your art, a new vision of beauty that all can appreciate and take joy in.

"You may tell me that you see no beauty and can take no joy in the works of Gauguin, Van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso, Cézanne and the rest. Well, I answer that you do not understand what they are trying to do. You are to-day in the same position with reference to them that the art critics were to Greco, Goya, Manet and Whistler a generation or two back. The work of the more modern men is but the evolution of what these men felt should be done and what they tried to do. You may not see it, but a future *Blatherer* will, and he'll write the same fulsome twaddle of them that you are now scribbling about the men who are dead and whom it is the fashion to collect."

Weaver looked up at us with flushed face and brightened eyes. He paused a moment and then smiled as he said:

"Then I said to him: 'Good morning, Mr. Lifter. You haven't, I know, understood a word of what I have been saying to you—but I thank you, all the same, for I've enjoyed myself immensely.' "

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" Black and I chorused together.

"Say, Weaver," I said, "do you know that what

you've been telling us this afternoon is worth writing down? Will you let me do it?"

"I shall be delighted. I think you'll do it better than Lifter did."

That is how I came to write this story.

The next morning I was at Black's studio to read him my screed. I happened to look out of the window, facing the avenue, when a sight presented itself below me that made me jump back with a roar.

"Black!" I exclaimed, "quick, come and look at this!"

Black rushed to the window, his photographer's cloth trailing from his shoulders. I pointed mutely to the street. There below an express wagon was ambling along with a sleepy driver behind the horse. On top of a mass of bundles, parcels and wrapped-up furniture sat Weaver, looking up at the sky, lost to everything, a dreamy smile playing about his placid face. The town-sparrow was migrating to the country to his splendid flat of two rooms and a bath in the Faubourg Saint Bron-nex.

"He is going to gather the lilacs of Paris," I murmured.

"And he'll find them," said Black, "even in the Bronx."

AT THE SIGN OF THE GOLDEN DISK

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IT is May in New York, and May in New York is the most alluring month of the year in any city of the world. The short-lived spring is then about to burgeon into summer, and the place is a delight to the eye and an enchantment to the heart. The squares and the Park are brilliant with the green of the tender grass and the young foliage—first fruits of the rich harvest to come. The blue of the sky is deep and as if palpable through the clear crystal air. The winds blow cool still, and play wooingly and amorously with the dainty dresses of the girls and women who are taking their afternoon promenades on Fifth Avenue. Sidewalks and roadway are the field of a moving kaleidoscope of colors and forms. The faces of the people wear an alertness and a liveliness of expression that tells of an acceleration of vitality. Women put on a carriage in their gait as if inviting admiration and challenging engagement; men square their shoulders and expand as though preparing to accept the challenge. "Yes," they all seem to be saying, "we are still young and willing to share in the gladness of the re-awakening year."

Michael Weaver had come down from his fourth-story eyrie in Fourteenth Street and found himself in the square of the Plaza, gazing wonderingly about him. He, too, was under the spell of the

season, and was overcome by a longing unutterable to open his heart to a friend. It seemed to him that he was radiating streams of magnetic force in an aching desire for companionship. Never before, so far as he could remember, had he felt the sense of loneliness he was conscious of now. In Paris there had been Jorn and Garnier, Matisse and Cézanne, to whom he could go for a chat that would help him and enhance him with hope. But in New York the few he knew were too busy, all absorbed in driving the wheels of machines. In Paris, too, there had been Angèle, dainty and winsome Angèle, with her soft eyes and the voice of a singing-bird. He trembled a little as he thought of her. There was no Angèle in New York.

> "O, how the spring of love resembleth
> The uncertain glory of an April day;
> Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
> And, by and by, a cloud takes all away."

The cloud of failure had taken everything away from him. Since that memorable day when Church had talked to him so earnestly about his career as an artist, he had taken his friend's words to heart, and had managed to eke out a living by doing odd jobs at interior decorating. He had even saved enough money to warrant him in nursing the vision of a studio of his own, not pretentious, of course, but where he could exhibit his work with some approach to dignity. At present, however, he was one of the great army, enforced to take the air with the freedom of an unchartered libertine. He smiled at the self-jeering phrase and looked up at the great white façade of the Hotel Plaza. There dwelt the

chartered libertines, he thought, the people who had grown big by means of the possessive instinct, while in him played rampant the impoverishing creative instinct. Well, he would labor and wait, for surely the time would come which would justify him in his ways and faith.

Stepping briskly across the square, he entered the Park and walked with eager haste to the Mall. He had often found peace there when he had permitted the beauty of the framed landscape, seen from the terrace, to pervade his troubled spirit. He sat down on a stone seat, glad to find no one about. Ah! how good it was to be just alive! He looked up at the swaying roof of leaves through the blue openings in which the sunlight came in bars of gold dust. What was the matter with him? Why had he not made good? Church must be right; the trouble was not with the world but with himself. He was asking too much from it. How could it know of him if he did not prove his worth? He must be kind and teach it the message he was bringing to it. But what was this message? Truth in the form of Beauty! The world had heard these words too often and had found them to be mere catch phrases in the mouths of charlatans. How could he present them so that it would listen refreshed? Yet, that was his job, and, come what may, he would stick to it. His art had been his father, mother, and only love. He had left his home for it and had lived alone for it. He would be true to himself in spite of what Church had said. To give up after all his labors and suffering would be to confess himself beaten, another futilitarian.

Oh, for the magic word to put a new spirit into the hearts of the people!

A feeling of great weariness came over him as he sat thus musing. He leaned back to allow the gracious solitude of the wooded place to soothe him. The eye-healing green of the shimmering landscape affected him drowsily, and it seemed as if he were once again in the forest of Fontainebleau with Angèle. She was looking very pretty in her dainty frock, and he noted with pleasure her tiny slippered feet as she ran from tree to tree. Then his eyes opened, and for a moment he knew not what to make of it. A young woman stood bending smilingly over him. As though in a dream he saw her face framed in a golden aureole of hair beneath a large broad-brimmed hat. It was a beautiful face, but not that of Angèle, and yet it was familiar to him. The next moment he had jumped up from his seat and exclaimed:

"Miss Rankin!"

"Yes, Mr. Weaver. Are you angry that I disturbed you?" The girl's blue eyes shone mischievously.

"I beg a thousand pardons. I must have fallen asleep. I was tired and the place is very restful. It must be late."

"It is, if you are going to the meeting at the Golden Disk. Are you?"

"I had forgotten all about it. Church is to speak, isn't he? Are you going?"

"Yes," she answered.

"Then if I may I will walk with you."

The two strolled together along the leafy roadway to the Plaza, Weaver stepping in time to the gait of the graceful girl as if treading on air. He smiled as he felt her silk skirt brushing against him, and his eyes took in the curves of her full-bodied womanhood with pleasing appreciation. In the deepening glow of the afternoon's light the olive green of her dress took on an autumnal tint which gave her an added charm. He had met Miss Rankin on several occasions at the Golden Disk meetings, but she had always moved him to an inexplicable feeling of regret. Her unaffected vivacity and splendid beauty seemed to him to belong to an order of beings far above him. And yet she had expressed herself as greatly interested in his art, though she confessed she did not understand it. He had tried to explain, but he never spoke to her without feeling that he was obtruding. Somehow, her personality made him conscious of his failure in life. He felt her as a challenge, and he could not quite see how he could answer it. He glanced admiringly at the cameo-like profile of the finely chiseled face and the shapely suéde-gloved hands.

"What are you reading?" he asked timidly, pointing to the book she was carrying.

"Vachel Lindsay's 'A Handy Guide for Beggars.' Have you read it?"

"No, he answered quietly, "I am sorry to say I read very little. But what a curious title? What's it about? I am interested in beggars. I am one myself," he added with a plaintive smile.

"I think you'd know better than I could ever tell

you, if you read it. But Mr. Church is an admirer of Mr. Lindsay and may refer to it this afternoon."

"Indeed, I am glad then that you reminded me of the meeting."

"His talk is to be about distinction in literature."

"What has literature to do with beggars? I don't see the connection."

"That's what Mr. Church will explain, I have no doubt. Mr. Lindsay is a poet, and he tramped about the country distributing a little tract on the Gospel of Beauty he had printed, and earning his living as a farm laborer. He also exchanged for meals copies of a booklet he wrote which he calls 'Rhymes to Be Traded for Bread.' "

"What an extraordinary proceeding!"

"Wasn't it? Here is what the tract says: *I come to you penniless and afoot, to bring a message. I am starting a new religious idea. The idea does not say "no" to any creed that you have heard . . . After this, let the denomination to which you now belong be called in your heart "The Church of Beauty" or "The Church of the open sky" . . . The Church of Beauty has two sides: The love of Beauty and the love of God.* What do you think of that?"

"I think it's astonishing. Why, he says what I've been thinking for years but didn't know how to say. What does he mean by beauty?"

"He's not given to definitions; but he writes poems that are beautiful. That's better, don't you think?"

"Far better. The man's evidently an artist. I'll be keenly interested in what Church has to say about him."

They had arrived by this time at a narrow brown-stone house, and entering the hall-way they stepped into a tiny elevator and were taken up lazily to the fourth floor. A short creaking passage led to a doorway from which came a murmur of many voices. In the room they entered about a dozen men were seated about it, on armchairs, sofas and lounges. By the window stood a quaint desk at which sat a man on a high-backed oak seat, whose shock of grey hair they recognized as Finch's. Near him, in a wide armchair, Church lay curled up. No one took any notice of the newcomers, who found places for themselves where they could, while the conversation went on in the gloaming of the dying day. Suddenly, a voice cried out: "Switch on the lights, Finch; it's time we began."

In the dim light of a couple of electric table-lamps, Miss Rankin saw that she was sitting between Hardy, the art critic, and Stuyvesant Marsh, the collector. Weaver was occupying a stool near Healey, who wore his usual plaintive smile. Foote, Aiterre and Hewitt lay sprawling on a lounge, while on a settee sat Barca drawing a caricature of Church, who was huddled up in his chair smoking a cigarette.

Without any attempt at formality, Finch called them all to order. "I asked Church to talk to us this evening," he said, "so that we might have the opportunity of discussing his theories with him. He has something to tell us, which, I think, is worth hearing. Now, Church, fire away."

The figure in the armchair uncurled itself and

showed a big head with a broad brow. Without rising and taking the cigarette from his mouth, Church began in a soft, even tone of pleasing quality:

"I have chosen literature as the subject of my talk because, of all the arts, it is the one most easily transmitted and the most direct in its appeal. It is not limited as are architecture, sculpture and painting to the comparatively small place of exhibition. The printing press has given it wings to fly to the farthest countries and visit the loneliest corners of the world. Moreover, it not only reveals the vision of beauty, but is a guide to those who, though gifted with the power of seeing, are unable to reveal what they see. It helps the artist to become articulate, and tells what it is for our deepest needs to know. It is the most democratic of all the arts, for it speaks to all, without regard to station or creed or birth, who can read and who have a living spirit.

"It is, therefore, a matter of great importance, that those who take upon themselves the business of writing should be highly mindful of their duties and highly moved in their fulfilment of them. In these days of free education many believe themselves to be called, but the results of their activities prove that few have been really chosen. My purpose is to point out the qualities which must be possessed by those who aim at distinction in literature.

"The basis of distinction in literature offers two aspects for consideration—the matter of literature and the manner in which that matter is presented. I shall deal for the present with the matter, because

on the choice of subject depends the value of the literary work as a contribution to life. The manner also will be affected by the choice, for if the choice be sincere and inevitable on the part of the writer, its presentation must, necessarily, reflect the man and give his style. So that both matter and manner depend on personal insight and sincerity.

"If I were to put into a sentence what I consider to be the one essential to distinction in literary expression, I should quote the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians: 'If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.'

"But what is literature?

"Literature is the embodiment of the results of the exercise of the creative imagination in language that is revealing, fulfilling, and musical. In other words, it is one of the forms of Art by which we express Truth as Beauty.

"I use these much-abused words, not in a transcendental but in a real sense.

"Truth is the revelation vouchsafed us when we are in love—in love with the things of the universe as well as in love with our fellow beings. We know truth in no other way. Copernicus and Newton, Buddha and Jesus are types of truth revealers through love.

"Beauty is that form we give to the revelation which is a permanent possibility for joy.

"When the Psalmist wrote:

> 'The Heavens declare the glory of God;
> And the firmament showeth His handiwork;
> Day unto day uttereth speech,
> And night unto night showeth knowledge.'

the Psalmist was in love with the universe, and the revelation he presents is expressed in language that is fulfilling and musical, and which it is our joy to read.

"William Blake, when he wrote his 'Cradle Song,' was in love with the children of humanity, and the expression of the workings of his creative imagination is a revelation that is fulfilling, musical and profoundly affecting.

'Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming in the joys of night:
Sleep, sleep in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
When thy little heart doth rest.

O the cunning wiles that weep
In thy little heart asleep!
When thy little heart doth wake
Then the dreadful night shall break.'

"This is love's revelation of the truth expressed in language which, despite its sorrow-charged thought, is a permanent possibility for joy.

"Our deepest sorrows spring also from love; they are the passion flowers of love—of love unrequited, of love indignant, of love frustrated, of love barren. So that the literature of grief—the grief that companions our unachieved aspirations—is also fulfilling and revealing. Of such literature is Shakes-

peare's *Hamlet,* the tragedy of an unstable mind unable to redeem itself from the great burden laid upon it by circumstance. Of such also is *King Lear,* that revealing poem of love frustrated and love indignant. Shakespeare was in love with these men or he could not have given us their revelations. Balzac was in love with Père Goriot and Cousin Bette, as was Browning with Abt Vogler and Rabbi ben Ezra and the people of 'The Ring and the Book.' Heart-breaking as these writings are, they are transfigured into beauty by the light of love shining from their creator's hearts, and the star of hope gleams guidingly through the dark clouds that rise up from the seas of their embracing thought.

"A writer who is without the sympathetic insight that is love's magical power, may be amusing and interesting, but he will never achieve distinction in his work. He will have nothing new to tell us, and nothing strangely beautiful to reveal. Nature, as well as human nature, is cold and unresponsive to the merely curious or the dillettante. She will tell us none of her secrets if we do not open our hearts to her; and intimacy of communion with our fellows will be denied to us if we are not "tender to the spirit touch of man's or maiden's eye." And all our academic cleverness and astuteness will avail us naught, for our stereotyped and barren speech will be tray us, and bear witness against us that we are not of those who have been chosen.

"The writings of the so-called realists do not contribute to our spiritual enjoyment and enhancement because they are loveless. The truth in them is but

a half-truth; it is not a revelation, nor is its expression either fulfilling or joy-giving, for not a single ray of love's light transfigures the volumes of smoke that rise up from their baleful fires. And they jar on us distressingly. They may speak with the tongues of men and angels, but they have not love, and so they are as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

"Literature is an interpretative revelation of life for the purpose of a truer life. It is the outcome of a looking 'before and after and pining for what is not'; of a yearning for something nobler; of an aspiration for the realization of ideals; of an affirmation of fulfilment. We write literature when we begin to experience either great joy or profound sorrow; when we are realizing that our utilitarianism is becoming largely futilitarianism. At such times we are aware that the one reality is that of the spirit. In joy we know it, and in sorrow we seek it. These spiritual states are due either to love fulfilled or to love denied. We then find ourselves impelled to expressions of affirmation or aspiration.

"Now the literature of any age is but the reflex of the spirit of that age. The spirit of America of late years has been one of moods rather than of essential being. We are a nation in the making and are, therefore, more concerned with obtaining utilitarian advantages and guarding ourselves against economic dangers, than we are with realizing dreams. We desire to be assured in our possessions, to be at liberty to enjoy them in comfort, and to be amused. The satisfaction of such wants is not the province of literature, but of journalism; and in

this respect we are amply served by our newspapers and magazines.

"In these forms of literary expression America excels, and they have assisted in developing in us an extraordinary quickness of wit and alertness of mentality. But we have paid a big price for these qualities. We are remarkably intelligent, but we lack imagination; we see facts clearly, but we have no visions; we are impassioned with things, but we are not in love.

"Now the peculiar power to see visions is given us when we experience either great joy or profound sorrow. At such times, we are, to use the language of the Bible, either drinking of or thirsting for the waters of life. A people in comfort and complacently satisfied with worldly goods can but rarely know these experiences. They are not disturbed either to exaltation or contrition. Life is worth living for them so long as the bodily appetites are fed and taxes are not too burdensome. If a spiritual hunger is felt at all, it is of a nature to be easily appeased by such arts as will serve to dissipate ennui. When there is neither exaltation nor contrition there can be no poetry; when there is no spiritual disturbance, there is no drama; and when people are desirous only of being amused, the narrative is sensual and sensational.

"But a change is becoming evident—a change due, partly, to our participation in the war, and partly to a sense of revolt against a growing industrial feudalism. We are thus becoming conscious that we possess large spiritual assets, and we are beginning to express that consciousness in a poetry of ap-

peal and a prose literature of hope. On both sides I see signs of a fresh affirmation of new revelations. The America that could respond so nobly to the demands made on it by the war, is an America that has a soul to save. Soon we shall realize the necessity for saving it, and when we do we shall transmute our spiritual worth into the gold of refreshing speech and the music of recreating poetry. It has already been exemplified in the prose of President Wilson's addresses and the poems of Mr. Vachel Lindsay.

"We can get no more out of literature than we put into it, and if we are to produce distinguished work, we must steep it in those qualities of the mind and heart which we recognize to be our most precious possessions. This is the function of the creative imagination, the mysterious operations of which are, indeed, to use Shakespeare's revealing phrase, 'a precious seeing,' and the products of which, as art, immortalize the best that we are and hope to be.

"The best in any of us is precipitated, in any activity of life, when we are consciously alive to the basic fact of existence, that there is no arbitrary dividing line between man and man or between man and nature; that we are really living in a universe.

"Wordsworth expressed it with beautiful clarity in his 'Primrose of the Rock':

> 'The flowers still faithful to the stems
> Their fellowship renew;
> The stems are faithful to the root,
> That worketh out of view;
> And to the rock the root adheres
> In every fibre true.

'Close clings to earth the living rock,
Though threatening still to fall;
The earth is constant to her sphere;
And God upholds them all;
So blooms this lonely plant, nor dreads
Her annual funeral.'

"This uniting or religious power we unconsciously are expressing in our national life as democracy, in our social life as courtesy, and in our personal life as amity; and literature is the creative imagination's revelations of its infinite manifestations, to the end that we may be enhanced through the joy of our faith in it as love.

"Literature has abiding value for us only in the sense that its art helps us to an accomplishment in the greatest of all arts—the art of living—and through the joy it gives us to bring us into that sympathetic relation with each other and the world which makes for our happiness.

"The writer who would achieve distinction in literature must take his stand on this holy ground; but it is we who must prepare a place for him there, for unless we need him he cannot come."

Church spoke the last words with a slow emphasis and a meaningful smile. In the pause which followed he lit a fresh cigarette and, turning to Finch, said, "That's all."

"That's the best sermon I ever heard," exclaimed Finch, amidst the general murmurs of approval; "you missed your vocation, Church, you ought to have been in the ministry."

"The pay was not sufficiently attractive," laughed Church.

"Well, I'm not sorry. We're ready now for the discussion, and one at a time, please. You have the floor, Foote,"

"I should like Church to explain," said Foote, his eye-glasses glinting through the half-lights, "what he means by Copernicus and Newton being truth revealers through love. I don't see where they come in as lovers. Indeed I don't follow Church on this point at all. A scientist must be cool and collected or he'd go astray altogether."

Church looked up smilingly and said in a quiet voice, "Perhaps you think Archimedes was cool when he ran naked through the streets of Syracuse, shouting 'Eureka,' or that Galileo was collected when he first saw the moons of Jupiter through his telescope? Is anybody cool and collected when he is passionately absorbed? I doubt it. Those men of science who keep their heads 'cool' may be excellent analysers and verifiers, but they are not discoverers. At best they are fairly accurate calculating and tabulating machines. I think you are laying undue stress on the intellect, which is not a creating power. Creation is the function of the imagination, which operates when we are in that intimate relation with things and ideas which permits of no doubt. It is the work of that faith spoken of as removing mountains. That intimacy is possible only through a complete giving of the self to the object, and that is the act of the lover. Whether it be realized through enthusiasm or passion, it is a unfying act, which is love in essence. I believe the great men of science, like Copernicus and Newton, through their passionate enthusiasm, experienced this intimacy of relation

I call love, and were thus vouchsafed the revelations of the truths they gave to the world. That's the best explanation I can give, Foote. As I see it there is a force which binds all things together to produce this that we know as the universe. The poem of Wordsworth I read to you beautifully embodies what I feel. I like to think of this unifying force as love, because this human word explains the mystery of the world in a human way. If we are looking for a power as real as gravitation, which is truly religious, and I use the adjective in its etymological as well as its later sense, you will find it in love. Its spiritual laws of action were discovered by Jesus eighteen centuries before Newton formulated its mechanical laws of motion. Its 'Principia' is the Sermon on the Mount.

"I am glad, Church, I asked for the explanation," said Foote.

"I think we all agree with Foote," exclaimed Aiterre; "we've heard a new interpretation of the teaching of Christianity, an interpretation, which, to my mind, proves it to be on the lines of evolution."

"I want to express my appreciation," remarked Marsh, "of Church's art of stating his case, and I propose that his address to us be printed and distributed among all our members."

Loud cries of approbation greeted the suggestion. Finch was about to speak when Weaver rose excitedly, and begged to be allowed to say a few words.

"I want to ask a question of Church," he said, "which is important to me. I know little or noth-

ing of literature as an art; the only art about which I can speak is painting, and I try to tell the truth as I know it in such forms of beauty as I see it. How is it that so few people are interested in the truth, or the beauty either? If the message the artist is bringing is not listened to, where does he come in? I endorse all that Church has said, but it leaves me stranded on the shoals of circumstance. Is there any solid ground on which workers like myself can build their hopes?"

"That's a practical question, Weaver," remarked Finch, "which scarcely concerns us. We meet here to help each other by sympathy, appreciation and encouragement. That's the best we can do for the present. It may be that our discussions, by enlightening us, will enable us to enlighten others. That's our purpose. In the meantime, each of us must work and be true to the best he knows. Perhaps Church can answer you more satisfactorily."

"Your personal appeal, Weaver," said Church in a tender voice, "touches me deeply. I will respond to it as best I know how, in the spirit in which you make it. Finch is right in what he has just said. We are trying here to formulate a creed that will keep us along the road we must travel in order to fulfil ourselves. All roads are beset with difficulties, but we can help each other over them, if we are really in earnest to realize our ideas. There are thousands like us all the world over, who are seeking for happy issues out of the afflictions which beset them. But the age in which we are living is about to bring great changes in the line of our endeavors. For two hundred years we have been guided by the

truths of science, which we have applied wonderfully for utilitarian purposes. Unfortunately, the ends we sought were personal advantages. We are now beginning to see that we made a terrible mistake. We are finding out that the truth, whether it is revealed by the scientist or the artist, must set us all free, if it is to abide as the truth. It cannot be exploited for private or selfish ends without robbing it of its emancipating virtues, and without sowing the seeds of discontent and rebellion. Your appeal for a ground on which to build your hope is really one of the many rebel voices that are everywhere being heard to-day. This war, through which we have passed, has demonstrated the utter futility of selfish ends, and has shown the absurdity of an economic science which leaves the hindmost to the devil. In a world of spirit-endowed beings there can no more be a permanent stability for a system which takes more than it gives, than there can be happiness in a home where love is not. Hitherto, we have measured our well-being in terms of money; but the changes of which I speak will set a new standard of measurement, a standard which will indicate true values—the progress made. Then will the scientist and the artist come into their own. The business man has sought to be wealthy for himself. The artist and the scientist aim to make all men wealthy. That basic difference explains the whole mystery of our troubles. And we must realize this before we can begin to set our own house of life in order. That was in my mind when I said that the man of distinction in literature cannot come unless we prepare a place for him, unless we need him. We do need

him, and not alone him, but the men of distinction in every science and in every art, and we shall soon begin to prepare places for them by accepting and working out Burke's ideal of a government 'of a people as a partnership in the arts and sciences, in every virtue and in all perfection.' So much for the larger question involved in your appeal, Weaver. As to you, yourself, I can only add this, that the human soul is so constituted that it must ever seek and never find. It is in the seeking that true happiness lies. There are no real goals; there are only stopping-places on the way for refreshment. This uncertainty is the romance of life, and the brave man loves the adventure. Let me repeat what Robert Louis Stevenson said: 'O, toiling hands of mortals! O, unwearied feet, travelling ye know not whither! Soon, soon it seems to you, you must come forth on some conspicuous hill-top, and but a little further, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado. Little do ye know your own blessedness, for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labor.' I am not quoting these words, Weaver, to cloud the issue before your mind; but they were written by a worker who was also an artist, and who achieved distinction in spite of many obstacles in his way. If the people of whom you complain do not see beauty, it is their misfortune and not their fault. But more see beauty than you think. No really great artist has ever been lost to the world. In the meantime, keep on preaching the Gospel of Beauty.

"The other day I read a little book called 'A Handy Guide to Beggars,' written by a poet,

Vachel Lindsay. He is the man, you will remember, who tramped about the country preaching what he called The Gospel of Beauty. He earned his food and lodging working as a farm laborer, and when he could find no work, he exchanged his booklet for a meal. That required courage to do; but poets always were reckless fellows. Vachel Lindsay, like Columbus, set out on a voyage of discovery. He was looking to find Cathay. He found, instead, a universe. The verse he prefixes to his 'Guide' embodies the aspiration of the poet as adventurer:

> 'Would that we had the fortunes of Columbus.
> Sailing his caravels a trackless way,
> He found a Universe—he sought Cathay.
> God give such dawns as when, his venture o'er,
> The Sailor looked upon San Salvador.
> God lead us past the setting of the Sun
> To wizard islands of august surprise;
> God make our blunders wise.'

"You will find as you read this book, that there are many people to be met with on the road of your adventure, who will understand your profoundest thought, if you have the art to talk to them in their own language. If you want them to see beauty and love it, that is what you must do. And you will find also that the art will come to you if you are not too proud of yourself, if you will be brotherly with those you meet. If you have been highly gifted, you must be kindly moved, for you have been called to serve. Like you, Weaver, the poet is one of those children of Don Quixote who, as Lindsay puts it, sees giants, where most folks see windmills.' That is why they are beggars. I rec-

ommend you to take this 'Handy Guide' with you along the hard road you are now traveling. It will help you to friendly intercourse with all you meet on the way—with the rich man at his gate as well as the laborer by the wayside. We are all beggars in this world; some of us beg for bread, others for station, but we all beg for love. The artist is blessed in that he can express it in himself and his work also."

"What is the Gospel of Beauty?" asked Miss Rankin.

"It is the Gospel of the Happy," answered Church; "but Weaver knows and he will tell it to you better than I can," and he laughed pleasantly.

"What has beauty got to do with happiness?" asked Hardy.

"Everything. As an art critic you should know. But, perhaps you are thinking of art as a technique. If you are, then, of course you are not seeing beauty. Wait until you're in love and you'll know the happiness as well as the beauty. Then you'll no longer be the critic, but the creator; for you'll be seeing visions yourself. That's what beauty is for—to make us see visions and to find our happiness in realizing them in our work. Ah, my dear Hardy, nature is a cunning witch. She endows us with the power to love, and then shows us beauty by which she charms that power to work for her. And the mystery of it is that we find our happiness only in doing this unconscious service, for in serving her we are fulfilling ourselves. So, you see, Miss Rankin, beauty is a very precious gift."